■ Lifestyle / D1

So long, Joe

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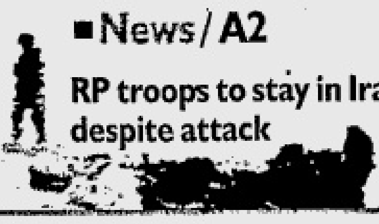

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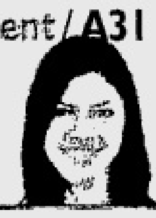

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BRO. EDDIE/ A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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By Norman Bordadora

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PING/ A17

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Friday, February 20, 2004 ★★★ 64 pages / 6 sections / vol. 19 / no. 74. P18

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DA KING/ A20

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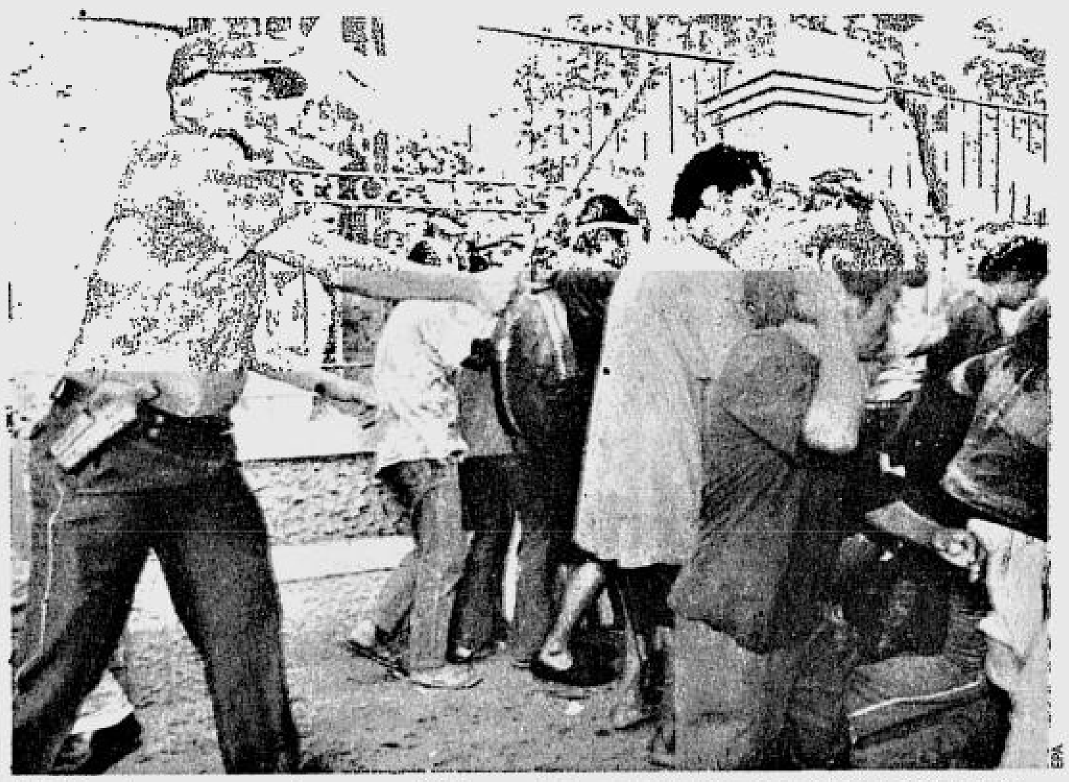
FPJ/ A18



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SC VOTES/ A21

8 mummies returned to Benguet caves

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POE/ A18

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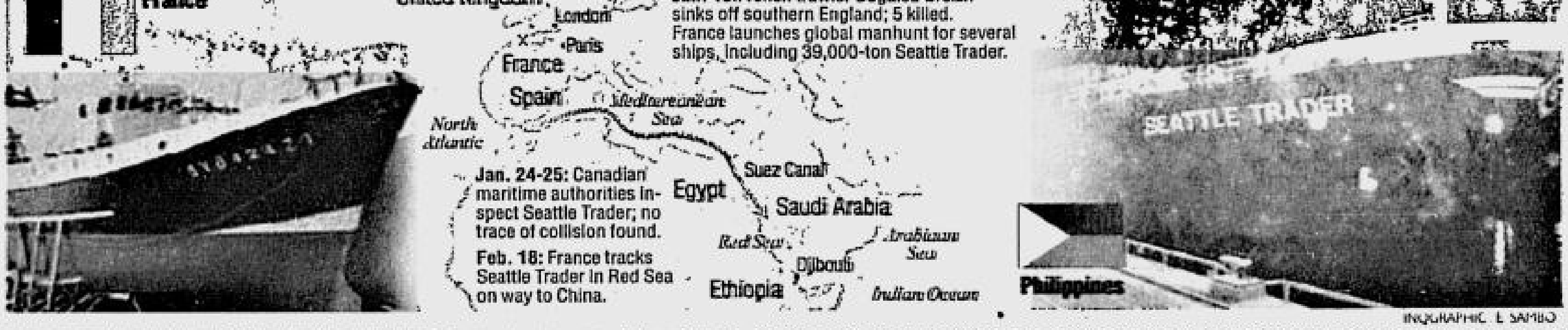

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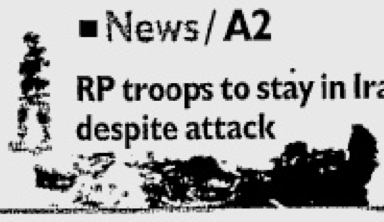

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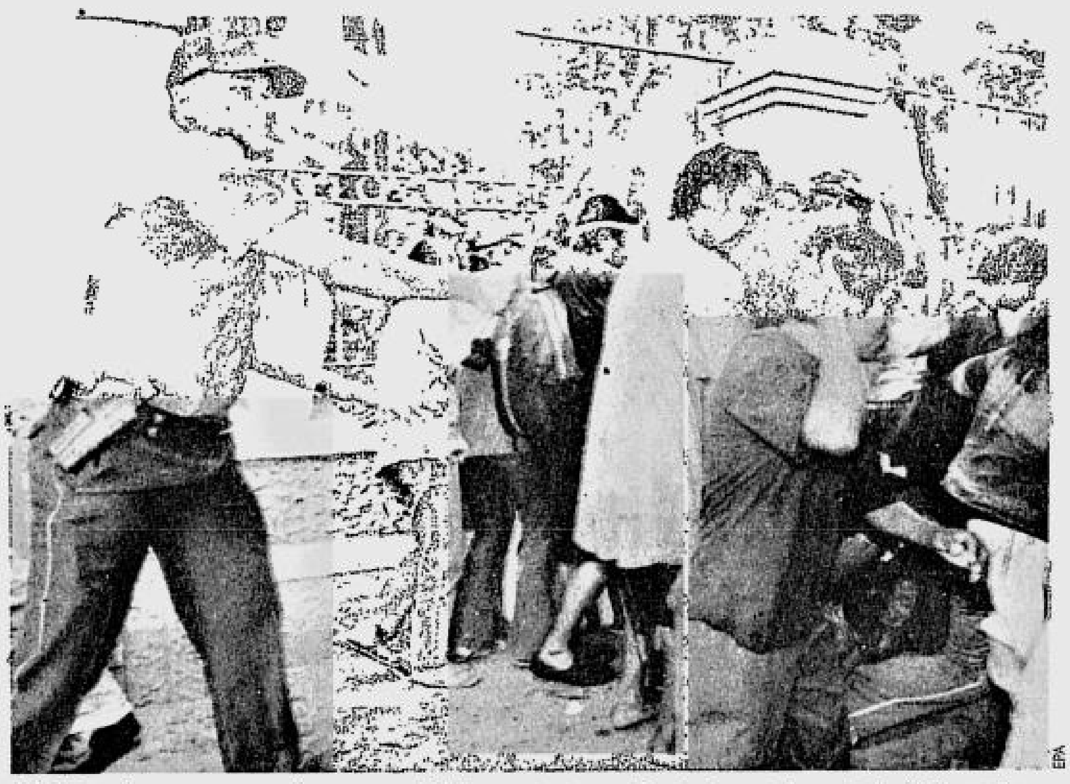

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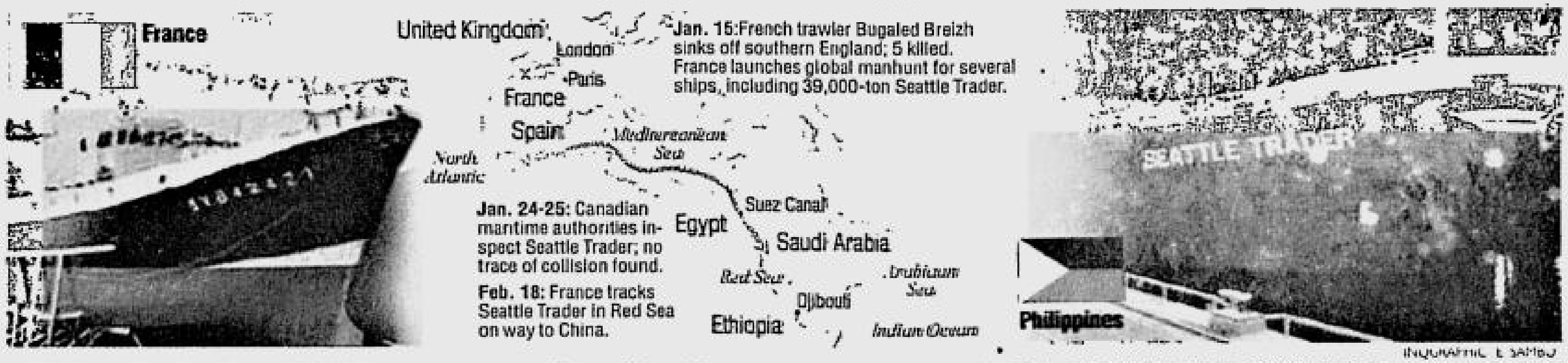
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FRENCH/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Eastern Visayas and Northern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/20/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

A US SOLDIER stands near the remains of one of two trucks, which were used in a terrorist attack on a Polish logistics base near Al-Hillah town, Iraq, Wednesday. Twelve Filipino soldiers were wounded in the attack.

EPA

Troops to stay in Iraq despite attack–GMA

By Christian V. Esguerra
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES will not pull its peacekeeping force out of Iraq despite the suicide bomb attack that wounded 12 Filipinos at a Polish military base in al-Hillah south of Baghdad the other day.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the attack would not affect the government's commitment to deploy more humanitarian workers to the war-ravaged country.

In a statement, the President said: "The latest terrorist attack will not deter us. It only strengthens our resolve to help the people of Iraq rebuild their lives."

Troops opened fire on two bomb-laden trucks as these hurtled through Camp Charlie in al-Hillah, the capital of Babil province and headquarters of the multinational force where most of the 96-man Philippine contingent is based.

Cuts in face

The subsequent explosions killed at least 13 Iraqis and wounded 64 people of various nationalities. The 12 Filipinos suffered superficial wounds, mostly cuts to the face.

"I commend the leaders and members of our contingent for the measures they had taken that helped keep them safe," the President said.

Ms Macapagal also ordered the Department of Foreign Affairs to monitor the situation and take the necessary steps to ensure the Filipinos' safety.

The DFA yesterday said the Philippine contingent in Iraq would remain there unless there was "a direct threat" to their safety.

In a press conference, DFA acting secretary Rafael Seguis said he had written President Macapagal and Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Albert, who is on an official trip to Myanmar, to recommend that the Filipino contingent remain in Iraq unless it was clear there was a direct threat to their safety.

Paramount concern

"The safety of our contingent members is of paramount concern. At present, there is no direct threat to our people," Seguis told reporters.

The DFA identified the wounded Filipinos as Maj. Orencio Jeruta, Capt. Buenaventura Zulueta, MSgt. Donald Cabatic, TSgt. Elvis Accad and Sgt. Dindo Biazon, all of the Philippine Army, and Philippine Navy personnel PO2 Bessie Celestial and S1DP Manuel Cajote.

Also hurt were Senior Superintendents Sukarno Ikbala and Elpidio Ulep of the Philippine National Police, and Department of Health nurses Erwin Jusayan, Teotimo Redulla Jr. and Arnold Gascon.

Seguis said all the wounded Filipinos were treated immediately at the base clinic and were in good condition.

For its part, the military said it "will not be cowed by this recent attack. It will just strengthen our resolve to help our Iraqi brothers to rebuild their nation," according to Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military information officer. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

Nene to new poll exec: Ka Roger is watching you

By Christine O. Avendaño

THINK twice before engaging in cheating.

This piece of advice for newly designated elections official Virgilio Garcillano came from opposition reelectionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., his biggest critic. Garcillano has been reassigned to oversee the polls in Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions.

Pimentel reminded Garcillano to behave because he is entering the turf of communist leader Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal.

"I just want to inform him that he should follow the law and if he's not afraid of the law then he should be afraid of Ka Roger," Pimentel said in a phone interview.

Amid calls to take back his appointment, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos pulled out Garcillano from the Mindanao assignment to monitor the elections in Regions 4 and 5.

Pimentel had earlier protested the appointment of Garcillano, whom he had accused of involvement in the "dagdag-bawas" (vote shaving and padding) operation in Mindanao in the 1995 elections that deprived him a seat in the Senate.

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Ping ready for exodus of KNP bets

By Norman Bordadora

BACOLOD City—Opposition candidate Panfilo Lacson has braced himself for an exodus of candidates from the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino if the Supreme Court disqualifies actor Fernando Poe Jr.

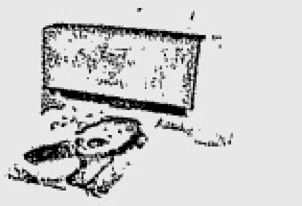
"(The candidates of the KNP) are most welcome (to be part of a Lacson-led opposition slate) but I've to talk with FPJ before taking them in. I am decent enough to inform him before any such developments," Lacson told reporters.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla, as of now Lacson's lone senatorial candidate, has been assured by Lacson that in no way would he be bumped of by other senatorial bets if the KNP coalition unravels with an SC decision disqualifying Poe.

Lacson even said that he would have an influence on who to take in and who not to.

"Congressman Padilla would be the one-man screening committee of those who'd want to join us.

A source from the Lacson camp has told reporters candidates of the KNP and local leaders of its member parties—the Partido ng Masang Pilipino and the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino faction under Sen. Edgardo Angara—have sent feelers they want in if Poe is disqualified.



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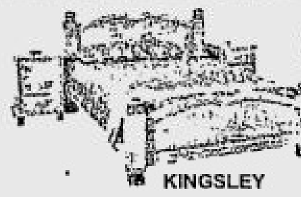

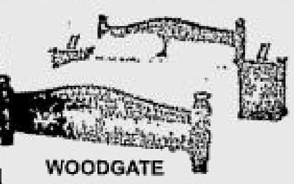

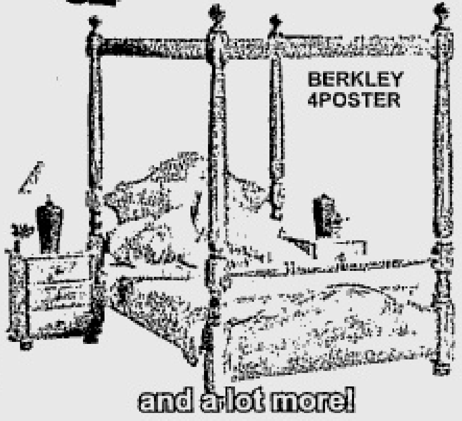

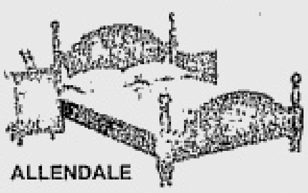

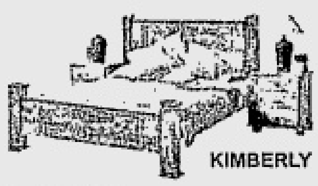

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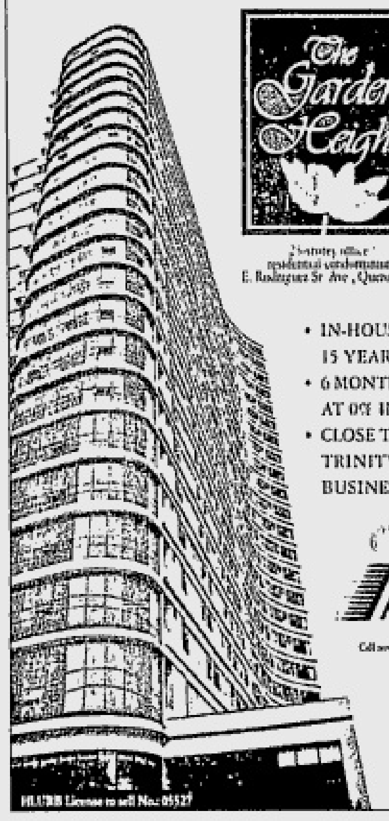

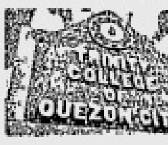

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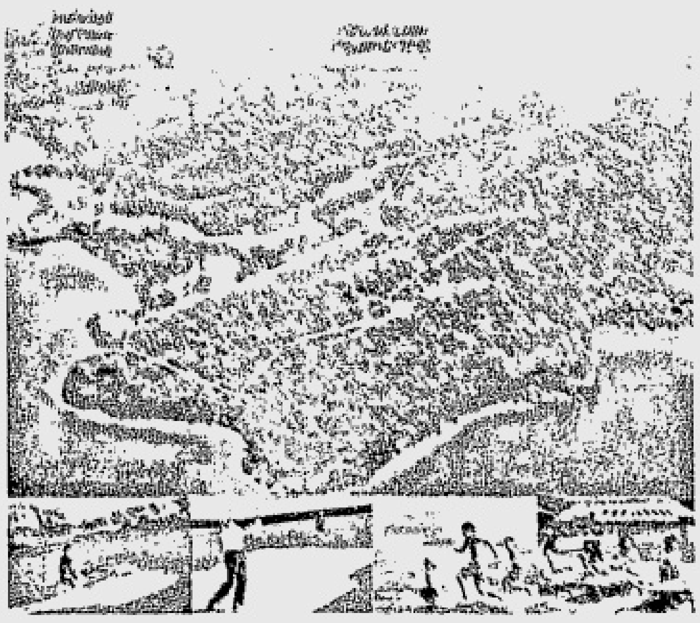

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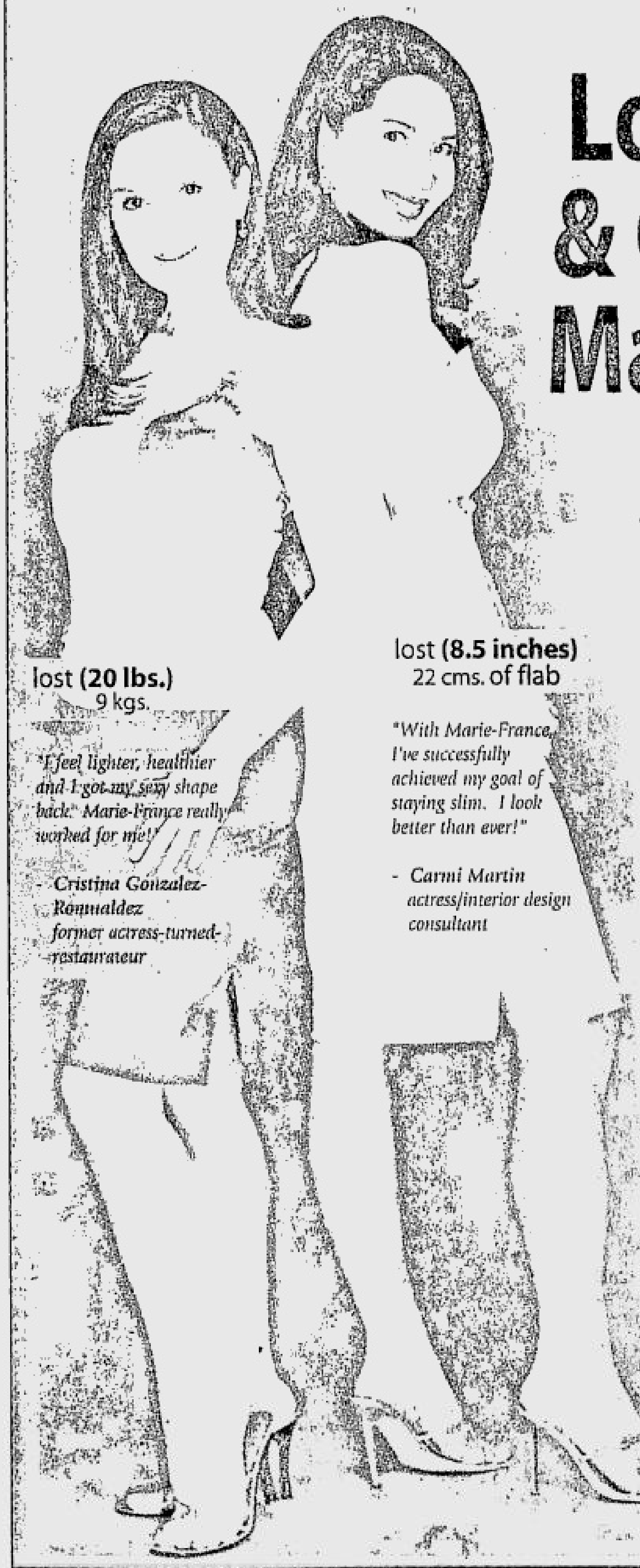

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FPJ CITIZENSHIP

Tuquero stand an Iglesia puzzle

By Armand N. Nocum

THE IGLESIA ni Cristo may not be inclined to support a mass action over the possible disqualification of movie star Fernando Poe Jr. from the presidential race, two allies of jailed former President Joseph Estrada said yesterday.

In the absence of INC support, such a protest action is unlikely to approach the level of the so-called Edsa III uprising in May 2001 in which angry Estrada supporters stormed Malacañang in a bid to return Estrada to power, they said.

The sources said the recent statement of former Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero that Poe was not a natural born-citizen may be a signal to the INC flock to stay away from the pro-Poe protests.

The bid to reinstate Estrada failed after the INC members, which formed the core of the Edsa III protesters, withdrew.

Although Tuquero said that what he stated was his personal view, he could not have made the "bold" declaration without the "blessings of the INC hierarchy, Tuquero being a loyal [INC] member," said the sources who asked not to be named.

They said it was possible that Tuquero had the go-ahead from top INC officials led by INC executive minister Erano "Ka Erdie" Manalo.

"The Tuquero declaration, made two days before the scheduled rallies arising from the hearing on Poe's disqualification case before the Supreme Court, is too much of a coincidence," said a close friend of Estrada.

The source noted that Tuquero made the statement at a morning radio program of the INC-owned radio, dzEC.

"Why would the announcer ask that particular question out of the blue? It looks like the whole thing was pre-arranged," the source said.

Estrada earlier warned of a civil war or civil unrest if Poe is disqualified from running. Other opposition leaders have expressed the same view.

In separate interviews, Estrada and Serafin Cuevas, another former Justice secretary who is a prominent INC member, sought to downplay Tuquero's opinion of the Poe disqualification case or that his views could be an indication of INC support for breakaway opposition presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson.

"He [Tuquero] is more pro-Ping. He was just expressing his personal views. It is not necessarily the view of the Iglesia," said Estrada.

In a telephone interview, Cuevas clarified that the INC had not made a move to endorse any candidate and that it was too early to do so.

"Our official stand is officially known one or two weeks before election," said Cuevas who is the INC chief legal counsel.

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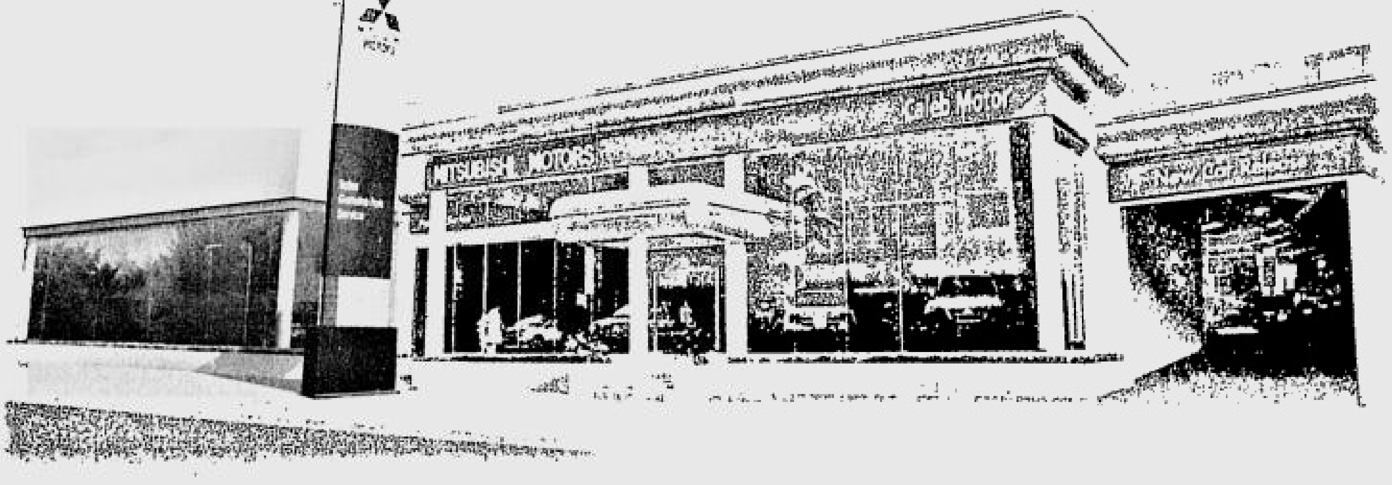

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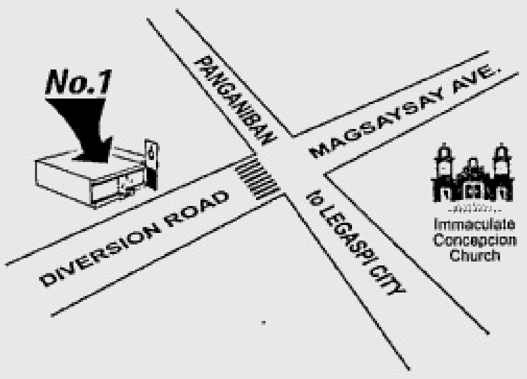

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Roco to bring 'Balagtasan' to Malacañang

By TJ Burgonio

FRANCISCO Baltazar, the father of the "Balagtasan," would be pleased.

The ancient Tagalog poetry style recited in a loud singsong voice that he made popular during the Spanish era would make a comeback, in Malacañang no less, if Raul Roco becomes the next President.

Imagine two persons, clad in native Barong Tagalog or terno, animatedly engaged in debate about the wisdom of, say, the shift to a parliamentary form of government using the flowery rhymes of the "Balagtasan."

Roco, standard-bearer of the Alyansa ng Pag-asa, plans to host "Balagtasans" on the sprawling grounds of Malacañang regularly.

"When the time comes, there should be a Balagtasan in Malacañang every month," said Roco, himself a poet and composer who wrote the lyrics to the Bedan Hymn of San Beda College, his alma mater.

Earlier in the day, Roco spoke at a convention of 8,000 artists, cultural workers, art managers, researchers, scholars and art educators at the Folk Arts Theater in Pasay City.

He told the artists of his vision for "a creative society in a self-reliant nation."

"Creativity is the root of the soul, of the culture, of the heart of the Filipino," he later told reporters. "Creativity is the way to go."

Roco, who produced the 1970's hit movie "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang," said the role of the Filipino artist in a fast-changing society is "to find what is unique about Philippine culture."

He noted that there was a tendency toward cultural sameness in the face of globalization, saying that cities like London, Beijing, Tokyo, New York and Manila were starting to sound, look and taste like one another.

"Culture and art are what make people strong. In a globe that has shrunk, the unique is important. It's the artists who make the unique stronger, who make the Filipino culture and heart," he said.

He then told the Folk Arts audience the story of his friend, National Artist Cesar Legazpi, who made a mark with his paintings even though he was colorblind.

"The secret, he told me, is to find the colors within you."

"We must all find the colors within us. A Roco administration will be a government that will enhance the creative colors within each Filipino."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 20, 2004
6th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	Jas 2:14-24, 26
Gospel:	Mk 8:34-9:1

Jesus called the people and his disciples and said, "If you want to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. For if you choose to save your life, you will lose it; and if you lose your life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, you will save it.

What good is it to gain the whole world but destroy yourself? There is nothing you can give to recover your life. I tell you: If anyone is ashamed of me and of my words among this adulterous and sinful people, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the Glory of his Father with the holy angels."

And he went on to say, "Truly I tell you, there are some here who will not die before they see the kingdom of God coming with power."

Commentary

Yesterday's gospel passage introduced the scandalous theme of suffering. Jesus was trying to draw the disciples into a deeper understanding of his identity. It was his hardest lesson, and it has to be learned over and over again. In today's reading the lesson continues. It is not only about him, it is also about us. "If you choose to save your life you will lose it; and if you lose your life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, you will save it."

The Christian faith is seldom allowed to challenge the ego; instead it is used to extend it to infinity. But saints are people who have received the challenge and lived by it. They assure us that there is no such thing as a painless life, and so running from pain cannot be the answer: we only run into the arms of greater pain. Yes, they tell us, exclude all foolish self-imposed pain. Work with what is left—the inevitable pain of life. Rest at peace with this pain: it is your best teacher and friend; it opens the gate to life. It questions your understanding of who and what you are. It takes away your cushions so that you can feel reality. This is not horrible, it is a promise of life—because only reality can save us. If things go against you don't take it as a personal insult; it is God trusting you. The dream of endless comfort is an insult, not this. God loves you enough to take you out of yourself.

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Military opposes proposal to remove NPA from terror list

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE ARMED Forces yesterday rejected the proposal to strike communist rebels off the list of "foreign terrorist organizations" as part of the ongoing negotiations intended to end the 35-year-old Marxist rebellion in the country.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military information officer, said doing so would "greatly hamper" the AFP's drive to "cleanse the countryside of influence and atrocities" by the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

That's because having the CPP-NPA deleted from the United State's list of terrorists would allow the rebels to resume the collection of financial support from other foreign organizations, the official said.

Lucero noted that the terror tag had isolated the rebels' financial resources through the freezing of their bank deposits.

The CPP-NPA, in effect, was forced to resort to extortion, particularly to the collection of permit-to-campaign fees from political candidates, to make up for the losses, he said.

The military's position was expected to be contained in its response to the joint statement the government and the National Democratic Front signed during the four-day peace talks in Oslo, Norway last week.

Chief government negotiator Silvestre Bello III was set to give by next week a briefing for all government agencies directly involved in the talks on the Oslo agreements.

Lucero said the military was willing to yield if removing the CPP-NPA from the "terror list" would eventually resolve the armed conflict.

"If this would bring peace to our country," he said, "we would support whatever decision the government panel would make."

The issue involving the terrorist tag nearly scuttled the peace talks anew after the government refused to work on a joint statement urging the US, the Council of the European Union, Australia and Canada to delete the CPP-NPA from their respective lists.

It was soon resolved when both negotiating panels agreed to include in the "Oslo Joint Statement" a paragraph urging these countries to support the ongoing peace talks.

The government and the NDF are set to hold another round of formal negotiations next month either in Oslo or Beijing.

The Oslo Joint Statement does not oblige Manila to initiate moves to have the Communist Party of the Philippines, together with its political and military wings, removed from the list of foreign terrorists of the United States and European countries.

In a press conference, Foreign-Acting Secretary Rafael Seguis said the two sides should consult the Norwegian government, the third-party mediator, for the correct interpretation of a controversial provision in the 10-point agreement.

Seguis backed the GRP panel's interpretation that was no commitment of the part of the Philippines to have the CPP-National Democractic Front of the Philippines-New Peoples Army and its chief political consultant Jose Ma. Sison delisted.

The provision states that the GRP and the NDFP "shall, jointly and separately, call upon the Government of the United States, the Council of the European Union and other concerned foreign states and governments, to support the efforts of the parties in resolving the outstanding issue of the 'terrorist' listing of the CPP/NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant in order to advance and promote the peace negotiations and address the root causes of armed conflict." *With a report from Jerome Aning*

Singapore teaches maids how not to fall

SINGAPORE—Singapore authorities have launched a safety course to teach new maids how to avoid falling from high-rise flats following an alarming rate of helpers plunging to their deaths, a report said Thursday.

The lessons began last October and from April 1 will be compulsory for new maids seeking to obtain a work permit, the Straits Times reported.

Nearly 100 Indonesian maids have fallen to their death here since 1999, usually while cleaning windows or hanging out the washing, according to Indonesian Embassy figures quoted by the paper.

Among the teaching tools created by the National Safety Council is a video opening with a shot of a maid's body lying on the ground after falling from an apartment and the words "Don't let this happen to you."

In a session conducted on Wednesday, 50 Indonesian maids were instructed not to overload bamboo poles when hanging out the wash and to avoid leaning out of the window or balcony when cleaning the glass.

Most Singaporeans live in government-built high-rise apartments and hang their laundry on bamboo poles fitted into slots outside the windows.

The maids, most of whom come from remote villages and have never lived in high-rise buildings, were also taught how to take care of children and the elderly, handle electrical equipment and first aid.

Indonesia will start a similar course in March to test maids' competency in English and household skills before allowing them to go to Singapore, the paper said.

There are about 140,000 maids in the affluent city-state, most of whom come from impoverished villages in Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. *AFP*

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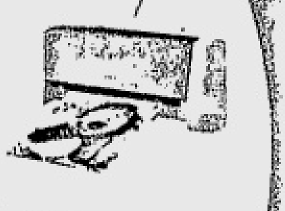

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GMA on Roco challenge to debate: Anytime

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is ready to face not just Raul Roco but also Fernando Poe Jr. and other presidential candidates in a national debate, Palace aides said yesterday.

"The President has nothing to fear because she is always ready to show or explain her program in any forum. [There is] no problem with the President. I just don't know about the others," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a dzRB interview.

Roco challenged Ms Macapagal and Poe to a televised debate after the two failed to show up in a forum last week at the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

"Anytime. If and when [a date is set], the President will graciously attend," Mike Defensor, the President's campaign spokesperson, told reporters during a campaign sortie of the K-4 coalition in Bulacan province yesterday.

But Defensor said all presidential candidates, especially Poe, should participate.

"I think FPJ owes it to the people to honestly show what kind of leadership he can offer," he said, adding that Ms Macapagal was capable of addressing all issues that would be raised concerning her governance and her bid for six more years in Malacañang.

Ms Macapagal's deputy spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said the President's record of governance was not debatable.

Roco yesterday said he welcomed the President's taking up his challenge.

"That's very good because there must be transparency. We must see what the candidates have to offer," he told reporters before speaking at a forum at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

"Now let's wait for the others," said Roco.

He said it would be up to the media "to set up the machinery so that all the other candidates" can attend the public debate.

Sen. Vicente Sotto, Poe's campaign manager, said he has yet to discuss Roco's challenge with his candidate.

But Sotto said such a debate should be something where "the questions are asked by the people and not by elitists."

"Let's debate in Payatas or Smokey Mountain," Sotto said.

Legislators from the ruling Lakas-CMD yesterday called on Poe to be man enough and accept Roco's challenge to debate.

"The debate will be his hour of glory if he can prove us all wrong by accepting the challenge," Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella said.

"We urge Poe to show us the stuff *Pandays* are made of. Prove to your followers that you are a true leader by joining the debate," he said.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles said that people have long wanted to hear from Poe about his platform but all he has offered so far was an "empty campaign marked by scripted speeches, handshakes and smiles, and a lot of free entertainment courtesy of his supporters."

Rep. Manuel "Way Kurat" Zamora of the Compostela Valley said a debate would reduce Poe's dependence on his advisers.

"One has no political will and is overly dependent if every time he has to act, he consults his advisers first. Will Poe be this kind of President?" he asked.

In a radio interview yesterday, the President said she was still hoping that Roco would drop his presidential bid and join her camp.

Defensor said many individuals in the Macapagal and Roco camps were hoping for a unification.

"We are still harboring that dream of unifying the Edsa forces," he said.

Analysts have said that Ms Macapagal stood a better chance of beating the popular Poe if Roco withdrew in her favor.

Officials of the Liberal Party, one of the parties of the K-4 coalition, have been negotiating for Roco's withdrawal but he has so far refused.

The President denied that she was using government funds for her campaign.

"I am using the funds for governance, not for the campaign. My presidency did not stop just because I am a candidate. In fact, I do more of governance than campaigning," she said.

The President's campaign team has gone through yet another reshuffle. Serge Remonde has replaced Defensor as head of the media bureau.

Defensor said he might head the "sorties group" because Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman will be taking charge of the sectoral groups. *Reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Cynthia D. Balana, TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño*

GMA using gov't funds, Ping says

BACOLOD CITY—Opposition candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of using proceeds of RA 8794, or the law imposing a road users' tax on motorists, to indirectly buy votes from the urban poor sector through the Proyektong Pangkabuhayan ni Gloria.

Lacson said the administration dipped its hands into the road users' tax when it provided jobs to street sweepers and other road workers under the project bearing the President's name. *Norman Bordadora*

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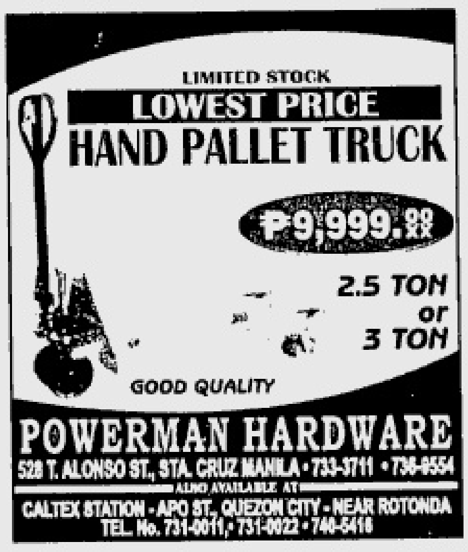
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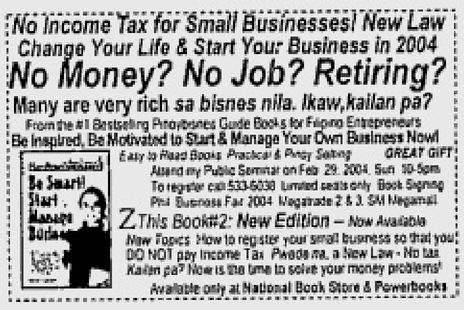
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8 stolen mummies returned to Benguet caves

From page A1

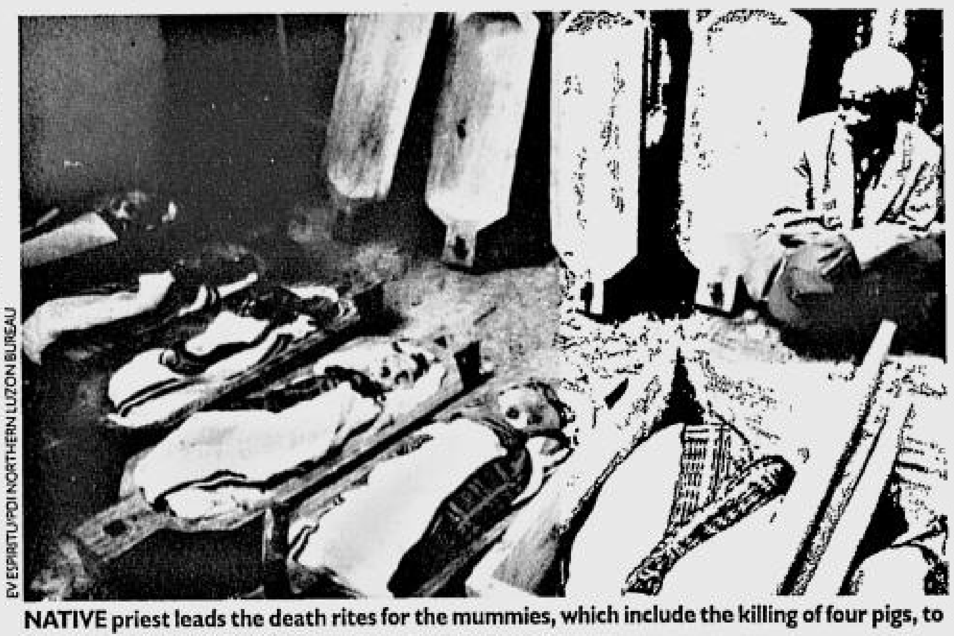
bunong (native priest), led two rituals in the town proper and at the burial site. Two native pigs, called *alingo*, were butchered in each ritual to appease their ancestors.

The mummies were wrapped in blankets and placed in a capsule-shaped coffin made of pinewood.

Mayor Ernesto Matuday said the elders decided to bring the mummies back to their traditional burial caves on a cliff in Timbac.

Efforts to recover the mummies began in the 1970s, Matuday said. Five of them were recovered in July last year from the house of the late Mt. Province Rep. Alfredo Lam-en at Barangay Antadao in Sagada, Mt. Province.

Lam-en's relatives and Sagada officials handed over the mummies to Kabayan officials last year.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NATIVE priest leads the death rites for the mummies, which include the killing of four pigs, to appease the spirits of their ancestors.

Just custodians

Sagada Mayor Thomas Killip has clarified that Lam-en's family only acted as custodians of the mummies. He belied earlier reports implying that Lam-en had stolen the mummies.

Killip said Lam-en acquired the five mummies and kept them as he waited for claimants. The mummies recovered from Lam-en's house had decayed.

The three other mummies buried here on Wednesday had been kept at the Benguet Museum in La Trinidad town. They were placed in a pinewood coffin for the burial.

The three mummies were well-preserved. The elders said the hair of one of the mummies, a woman, was intact and the body bore traditional tattoos all over.

Kenneth Elcho, a resident, said the tattoos implied that the mummy was a member of the local nobility or a wife of a tribal chieftain.

Ancestral love

Orlando Abinion, curator of the National Museum, said mummification, locally known as *mek 'ing*, was one of the highest forms of love that the Ibaloi people showed to their ancestors.

The mummies were placed in a cave after prayers were offered and meals were served to the community.

Abinion said iron grills would be placed at the mouth of the cave to secure the coffins from vandals.

He said the National Museum's inventory showed 53 burial caves in Benguet, of which five contained centuries-old mummies.

But Abinion said the National Museum believed that the province still had other caves containing mummies.

"Residents who know about these caves keep the information to themselves because they fear that the mummies will be stolen," he said.

Aside from Timbac, the caves in Kabayan where centuries-old mummies are kept are the Ambaklet, Tinongchol and Bangao.

Search on

Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas said the search for other missing Kabayan mummies would continue.

He said the provincial government and the National Museum were asking the Department of Foreign Affairs to verify reports that some mummies from the province were being sold in San Francisco, California.

In 2002, a German tourist gave Kabayan resident Baban Merong a newspaper advertisement announcing about the sale of the mummies. The advertisement said 10 mummies were being sold at a novelty shop in San Francisco.

Abinion said the National Museum tried to locate the mummies last year through the DFA's consular offices in Washington and California.

REUTERS

UP CLOSE: A mummy wrapped in a blanket is placed in a pinewood coffin ready for burial.

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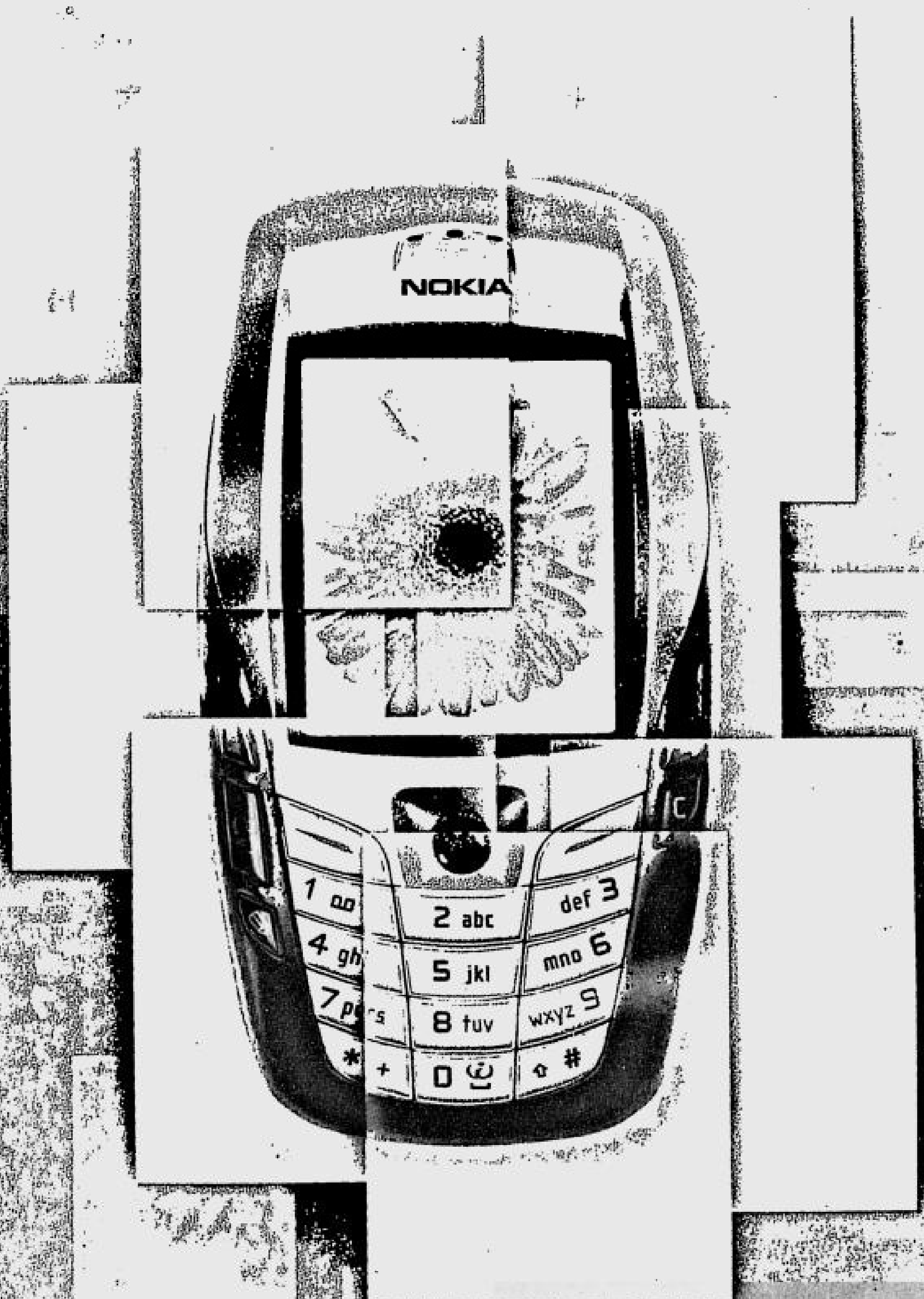

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Indonesia dengue deaths rise to 175

JAKARTA—The death toll from Indonesia's dengue fever outbreak rose to 175 Thursday and a health official warned that floods beginning to inundate Jakarta and other cities would worsen the situation.

The "extraordinary" mosquito-borne outbreak has spread to four more provinces and infected 8,735 people in a total of 12 provinces since Jan. 1, said health department spokesperson Dr. Mariani Reksoprojo.

Most of the cases are on Java island, where over half of Indonesia's 212 million people live. The number of infections is more than double those in the same period last year.

Reksoprojo said the death toll had risen to 175 Thursday morning.

She said several days of rain which has caused flooding in the capital and other cities will swell the number of dengue cases.

"It's clear it will worsen the situation," she said.

Local newspaper reports Thursday said 1,800 people were forced to flee their flooded homes in one Jakarta neighborhood while more than 1,000 homes on the outskirts of the city were submerged.

Television pictures showed waist-high water in one West Jakarta neighborhood and an AFP reporter said knee-high floodwater had washed across parts of roads and entered buildings in the east of the capital.

Reksoprojo said the impact from flooding will be indirect because the female *Aedes* mosquitoes which transmit dengue viruses do not breed in muddy flood waters.

They prefer clean water from containers like earthenware jars, cisterns, discarded plastic food containers or used automobile tires, and other items that collect rainwater or drops that fall from an air conditioner.

But because of the disruption to people's lives caused by flooding, they will not be able to devote enough attention to keeping their environment clean, which is the key to avoiding dengue, Reksoprojo said.

"It is extremely related to the behavior of the people and their desire to clean their environment," she said.

The head of the World Health Organization in Indonesia, Dr. Georg Petersen, said Indonesian authorities know very well how to handle dengue, an annual problem in the country.

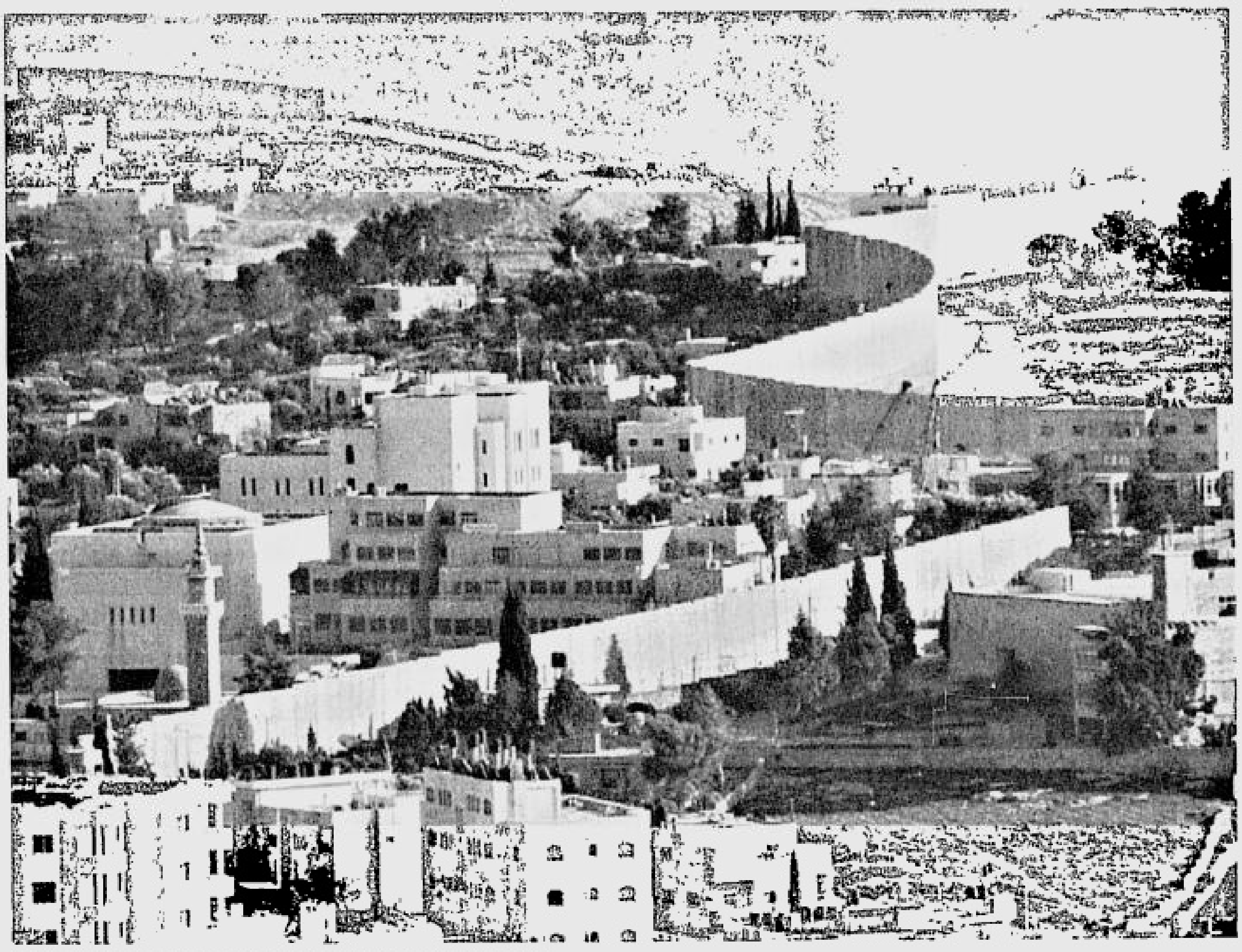
Indonesian health officials suspect a new virus strain could be responsible for the outbreak.

Petersen said it's hard to say whether a new strain is involved in the current outbreak, which is not totally unexpected.

"Every year there has been a steady increase in dengue cases all over Southeast Asia," he said.

Dengue also peaks in cycles of about five years and the current infections come at the peak of that cycle, he said.

Reksoprojo said the health department has a long-standing program to educate the public about keeping their environment clean to prevent dengue, a severe, flu-like illness that seldom causes death. *AFP*



RED CROSS CONDEMNS WEST BANK BARRIER

The International Red Cross assailed Israel's West Bank barrier Feb. 18 as a violation of humanitarian law for slashing through land envisaged for a Palestinian state under a US-backed peace plan. Picture provides a general view of the concrete wall separating the West Bank village of Abu Dis from east Jerusalem. REUTERS

Bird flu toll hits 22; WHO warns crisis not yet curbed

HANOI—The World Health Organization warned that none of the nations hit by bird flu had brought the virus under control as a baby girl in Vietnam was confirmed to have the disease Thursday.

Health authorities in Vietnam, the country worst hit by the crisis with 15 deaths out of 22 fatalities across Asia, confirmed the latest human infection a day after the virus claimed two more lives in the region.

Vietnames officials said the 16-month-old girl was admitted to the Paediatric Hospital No. 1 in Ho Chi Minh City on Monday and subsequently tested positive for H5N1.

"We have informed the hospital that her test sample shows that she has been infected with H5N1," said Phan Van Tu, a virologist at the Pasteur Institute.

The infection followed confirmation Wednesday of the deaths of a 3-year-old boy in Vietnam, and a 4-year-old boy in Thailand, where seven people have died from the virus.

Vietnam and Thailand are the only countries to have confirmed human infections of H5N1, which has also been reported in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos and South Korea.

Weaker strains have been found in poultry in Taiwan and Pakistan.

The WHO, which last week chided nations for putting economic concerns before human health, stressed the battle against the virus was far from over and called on affected countries not to drop their guard.

"Full control has not yet been achieved in any of these countries, despite intensive efforts in many," the WHO said in a statement.

"Countries need to maintain a high level of vigilance, and must not relax their surveillance and detection efforts," the UN health agency said, adding it could take years before the disease was beaten once and for all. *AFP*

Annan: June poll in Iraq not possible

TOKYO—UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said it would be impossible to hold elections in Iraq before the end of June, in an interview with the Yomiuri Shimbun daily published Thursday.

Annan was quoted as telling Japan's biggest-selling daily that elections were essential but "there seems to be general acceptance of the fact that it is not going to be possible to arrange an election between now and the end of June."

Elections had to be properly organized and the conditions had to be right with security, and the political and legal instruments ready for the elections, the UN chief told the paper in the interview conducted at the UN headquarters in New York.

"So I think the conclusion then will have to be that elections before the end of June may not be possible, but there will have to be better organized elections later on," Annan said.

The United States plans to bring the occupation to a formal end and hand over the reins of power in Baghdad to an unelected Iraqi government on June 30.

But Iraq's leading Shiite Muslim cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has led the call for direct elections and protested against the US-led coalition's transfer of power to unelected officials.

Annan said the UN would help with economic and political reconstruction in Iraq but argued the security situation must be improved before the global body could step in.

"Once the interim or caretaker government has been established, we will work with them... But a secure environment has to be created for us to be carry on that," he said.

Earlier in the month, Annan dispatched a nine-member mission headed by his special advisor Lakhdar Brahimi to investigate the feasibility of early polls in Iraq. *AFP*

THE SAN Francisco City Hall is pictured Feb. 18 in San Francisco, California, where the local government has been issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples for the past week. AFP

Wrong form may nullify S. Francisco gay unions

SAN FRANCISCO—California will not recognize the marriage licenses granted to thousands of same-sex couples in San Francisco because the city created its own form to remove such terms as "bride" and "groom," a state official said on Wednesday.

"There is a statewide form that every county has to use for marriage applications. If we receive application forms that are different from the single form used throughout the state, we will not accept them," said Nicole Kasabian Evans, a spokesperson for the Health and Human Services Agency.

Meanwhile, US President George W. Bush joined a chorus of those opposing San Francisco's nearly week-long experiment in allowing gay marriages, a practice condemned on Tuesday night by California's Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Evans said her agency, which processes all state marriage license applications that become state records, would return the forms if the city sent them in—but she admitted that the issue will really be decided in the courts because the weddings violate a state law defining marriage as being between a man and a woman.

Nancy Lafaro, director of the San Francisco County Clerk's office, said the marriage license applications gay and lesbian couples in San Francisco have filled out since last Thursday were changed. "For example, instead of saying bride or groom, the form in San Francisco says applicant one and applicant two," she said.

Lafaro added the same-sex marriage application form also uses the terms "unmarried individuals" rather than "unmarried man" or "unmarried woman.

About 2,600 gay and lesbian couples have been married since Mayor Gavin Newsom allowed same-sex marriages on grounds that homosexuals have the right to wed under the state's equal protection clause.

Same-sex marriages, however, defy Proposition 22, a law approved in 2000 by California voters, that restricts marriage to heterosexual couples. The measure passed with support from about 60 percent of those who voted on the initiative.

President Bush on Wednesday told reporters in Washington he was "troubled" by San Francisco's same-sex marriages.

"I have consistently stated that I'll support (a) law to protect marriage between a man and a woman. And, obviously, these events are influencing my decision," Bush said in his first public comments on the city's same-sex marriages. *Reuters*

Expulsion of asylum seekers soils Dutch image

THE HAGUE—The Dutch parliament's decision to approve the expulsion of 26,000 asylum seekers has tarnished the country's tolerant image amid signs of a hardening stance against immigration by nearly all political parties.

On Tuesday lawmakers passed a bill calling for the ejection of thousands of asylum seekers, many of whom have lived in the country for years, despite strong opposition from the public and human rights groups.

Having opened its doors to thousands of Jews expelled from Spain in the late 15th century and a century later to French Protestants (Huguenots) fleeing the religious wars in their homeland, the Netherlands has earned a reputation as an open, tolerant country.

But this image has been dented by the new legislation under which thousands of asylum seekers will be forcibly returned to their home countries within the next three years, even if they have been living in the country for some time.

The rights group Human Rights Watch (HRW) said the bill was a "deportation law violating international standards" and warned that it "would signal a serious departure from the Netherlands' historic role as a leader in human rights protection in Europe."

Church groups point out that some of the asylum seekers have been in this country for more than 10 years awaiting official processing of their requests and have fully integrated in Dutch society.

The bill has deeply divided Dutch society—where gay marriages are permitted and marijuana is widely decriminalized—and set the government and opposition at loggerheads in a system renowned for consensus. *AFP*

Blast danger recedes at Iran train disaster site

NISHAPUR, Iran—Firemen on Thursday extinguished the last blazes on a runaway freight train loaded with fuel and chemicals that blew up in eastern Iran and killed nearly 300 people, allowing rescue workers to start digging for more victims.

Revolutionary guards cordoned off a wide area around the disaster site overnight due to fears of further blasts and pollution, leaving relief teams helpless to search the rubble of shattered mud houses for more bodies.

But at dawn the head of the Khorasan province emergency headquarters, Vahid Barakchi, said: "There have not been any further explosions since last night and the danger of further explosions has disappeared."

"Firefighters have given the all-clear. There is no danger and rescue teams need only wear ordinary masks," he said.

Authorities decreed a day of mourning in Iran's northeastern province as the dead—many of them firemen, security forces and local officials—were to be buried in the nearest town, Nishapur.

Speaking by mobile phone from a crater ripped open by Wednesday's massive blast, Barakchi said the death toll stood at 295 with some 450 people injured, and more corpses might be found beneath the ruins of a devastated village.

Many of the bodies were charred beyond recognition.

Engineers began lifting the mangled wreckage of 51 wagons that broke loose and hurtled downhill until the train derailed and caught fire from the main Tehran-Mashad rail line.

Roads and Transport Minister Ahmad Khorram told the local Khorasan daily the cause of disaster had not yet been determined. Repairs were expected to take three days.

Some initial reports said the wagons were detached by earth tremors, but officials said the explosion, which sent shock waves felt some 70 km away in the city of Mashad, was so massive that it may have been confused with an earthquake.

Barakchi said the lethal cocktail of gasoline and fertilizer had polluted the nearest village, Deh-e No Hashemabad. Three other villages were devastated by the blast. *Reuters*

Haiti rebels to Aristide: Quit or we take city

PORT-AU-PRINCE—Rebels threatened to take over Haiti's second largest city unless President Jean Bertrand Aristide resigned, as the embattled leader turned down a partial solution to a bloody uprising French aid groups said could soon turn into a humanitarian disaster.

"We are not indifferent to the massacres committed by Aristide's people, and if he does not resign we will liberate Cap-Haitien, then the West," rebel leader Guy Philippe said Wednesday in the rebel-held northern city of Gonaive.

"The international community must tell him to resign quickly, or else we will take the palace," Philippe said in a reference to the National Palace and presidential seat in Port-au-Prince, which is in Haiti's western department.

Philippe, a former police chief, spoke after armed anti-government rebels renamed their movement the National Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Haiti and made him their commander.

The UN Security Council and South American leaders called for a peaceful solution to the escalating crisis in Haiti, where more than 55 people have been killed in the past two weeks in an armed uprising against the government.

Aristide, meanwhile, refused to name a new prime minister who would enjoy the support of the opposition, as part of a compromise solution for defusing the crisis put together by the 15-nation Caribbean Community (Caricom).

ARISTIDE

"If you are talking about the opposition that is publicly supporting terrorists, don't think I will have the irresponsibility of handing them over such a post," Aristide said Wednesday in an interview with Radio Canada.

Caricom, which is opposed to a forced removal of the Haitian president, has also called for freeing political prisoners and disbanding armed militias.

Aristide said he was ready to ask his supporters to put down arms.

"We have already set this example, and we will continue to say no to violence, no to armed groups," he said.

Port-au-Prince and Cap Haitien were quiet on Wednesday, but residents said police had fled a number of small towns along the border with the Dominican Republic.

A resident of Cap Haitien said by telephone that armed Aristide supporters had used old trucks and large stones to barricade the two main roads into the city. *AFP*

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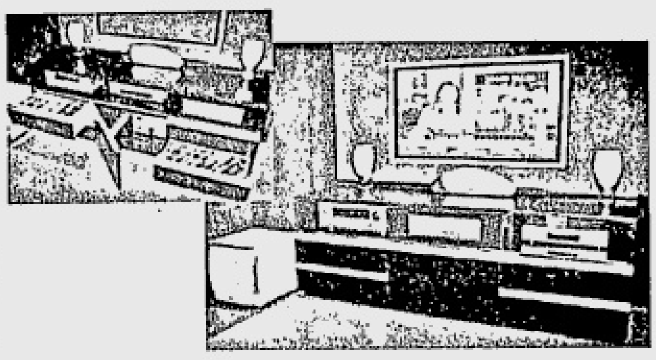

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Cyprus talks to continue despite blast

NICOSIA, Cyprus—Just hours before Cyprus reunification talks were scheduled to begin Thursday, a small bomb exploded in front of the home of the prime minister of the self-declared Turkish Cypriot state. There were no injuries.

Turkish Cypriot Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Talat, a leading advocate of reunification, quickly vowed that the talks would go on.

The blast in front of his home shattered windows and tore apart tree branches and street signs.

Greek Cypriot President Tassos Papadopoulos will meet with Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash and Talat at an abandoned airport on the sides' border later Thursday for an intense round of UN-sponsored peace talks aimed at ending the island's division, a round of talks that is being met with unprecedented optimism on both sides.

No return

"There is no return from this road," Talat told reporters in front of his home after the early morning blast. "In this process, there may be some people who are disturbed by the two communities coming closer, but such acts will not make us return from this path."

There have been fears in Cyprus that extremists could use violence to try and disrupt the talks.

For decades, negotiations have failed, but the two sides now face a firm deadline. Cyprus enters the European Union on May 1 as a united country or as a divided land with UN peacekeepers patrolling in its capital.

The United States and the EU are closely watching the talks and are putting pressure on Turkey and Greece to press for a settlement before Cyprus' entry into the EU.

For Turkey, Cyprus' entry as a split country could be a disaster for its own EU bid. Turkey has 40,000 troops on the north of the island and EU leaders have made it clear that those soldiers could be considered as occupying EU territory after May 1.

In an address to parliament, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul spoke of the possibility that without a solution, some EU officials who visit aspiring member Turkey in the future could be from Cyprus.

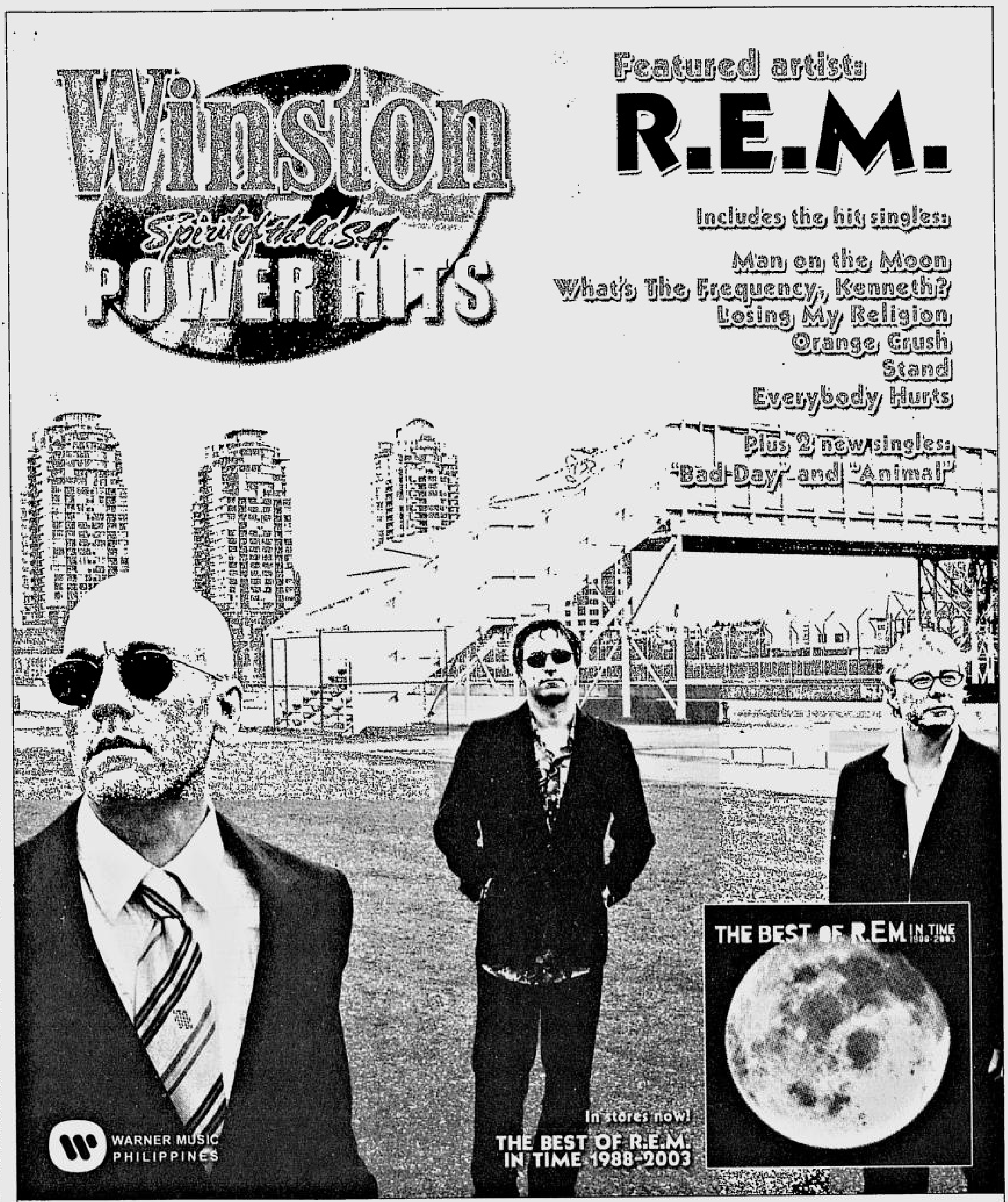
EU membership

For EU and Greek Cypriot leaders, the division raises the possibility of an EU member that controls only two-thirds of its territory. EU laws would only apply in the internationally recognized Greek Cypriot side of the island if Cyprus enters the EU divided.

"We are now closer than ever to finding a solution," EU Expansion Commissioner Guenter Verheugen said earlier this week. Verheugen arrived in Cyprus on Wednesday to stress the EU's interest in a settlement. US President George W. Bush pressed the need for a solution in his January talks with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The negotiations will open at Nicosia's airport, which was abandoned after the island was divided in 1974 following a Turkish invasion after a short-lived coup by supporters of union with Greece. The airport is now used by UN peacekeepers.

The last round of talks collapsed in April, amid Denktash's objections. Denktash has long said that uniting the Turkish Cypriot north with the Greek Cypriot south would lead to Greek Cypriot domination. The south, with a population of 600,000, has three times as many people as the north and about five times the per capita income. *AP*



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Slain activist tortured, says group

LUCENA CITY—The body of a leftist activist in Occidental Mindoro, who was found dead Wednesday, bore signs of torture before he was shot twice and stabbed seven times, the militant Anakpawis party-list group said yesterday.

"It was not enough that the military abducted Adrian, a cheerful, young man full of promise, in front of his wife and family ... this is the work of monsters, and in this country, the most vicious monsters are in the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Crispin Beltran, Anakpawis chair, said in a phone interview.

On Wednesday, Adrian Alegria, 21, Anakpawis coordinator, was found dead several hours after he was abducted by a group of armed men early dawn at his residence in Barangay Lumang Bayan, Sta. Cruz town.

The report said Alegria's wrists and lower arms bore rope burns from being tied too tightly.

He was shot once in the chest, and once in the nape. The bullet exited through his face, all but destroying it.

His broken body was then thrown into the Amnay River in Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro.

The Armed Forces Southern Luzon Unified Command based in Camp Nakar here immediately denied responsibility for the killing.

"Our job is to protect the people and not to kill civilians. This is a rehashed charge," said Maj. Jose Broso, Solcom public information officer.

"The military has made me a widow. But they killed more than just my husband. They also killed a peasant leader and a political activist. They killed Adrian because he would not back down from his advocacy," Ina Silverio, Anakpawis spokesperson, quoted Michelle, the victim's wife of three months, during their phone conversation.

According to Michelle, the military had been following Alegria after branding him as a member of the New People's Army in the area.

"How could he be an NPA? He came home to me everyday here in Sta. Cruz, not to the mountain. He was an Anakpawis coordinator, giving out Anakpawis brochures and other campaign materials. To the military, to this government, everyone who speaks vocally about peasant issues and reforms in the system is an NPA, a communist. Adrian was working to win votes for Anakpawis party-list," Michelle said in the phone conversation with Silverio.

Alegria's body lies in his house in Barangay Lumang Bayan.

"According to Michelle, at least seven armed men broke into their house by kicking the door. The suspects manhandled the victim, wresting him away from his wife. The men then alternately pushed and dragged Alegria to a waiting red pick-up truck," Silverio said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

"That was the last time his family saw him alive," she said.

Aside from pointing to the military as the primary suspect, Beltran also disclosed that based on the testimonies of witnesses who had come forward, the so-called "Death Squad" forces of an anti-communist group in Mindoro—the "Integrated Mindoro People's Alliance Against Crime and Communist-Terrorist or Impaact—also had a hand in the killing.

Beltran said Impaact has been monitored while actively campaigning against Anakpawis and Bayan Muna in Mindoro. "The residents are virtually threatened against voting for either of the party-lists," he said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Environment groups plan wind farm in Panay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Efforts to provide alternative solutions to the power deficit of Panay Island got a boost yesterday with the launching of a wind monitoring station in Pandan town, Antique.

The 40-meter station uses state-of-the-art technology that would gather data to establish an annual trend of wind characteristics. The data includes wind direction, velocity and turbulence, according to Silverio Navarro of the Solar Electric Company.

The launching came four days after the Greenpeace installed a similar wind-measuring device in Pulupandan town, Negros Occidental.

The P270,000-station located in Barangay Guia, around 5 km from Pandan town proper, is a project of the environmental conservation group World Wildlife Fund (WWF-Philippines) in partnership with the First Philippine Energy Corporation (FPEC).

The project could validate if the country has vast resources of renewable energy that can be harnessed to move the economy, said FPEC president and chief operating officer Ricardo Yatco in a statement.

Ina Pozon, WWF-Philippines campaign officer, said data on renewable energy is critical in educating communities on the availability of alternative sources of energy amid government warnings of a power crisis.

Like the WWF, the Greenpeace installed a wind-measuring device at Sitio Wayang, Barangay Patic, Pulupandan to determine if a wind farm can be put up in the town as an alternative source of power to a coal-fired plant.

The device measures wind speed and wind direction every minute, 24 hours a day. It saves gathered data in a data logger, which can be downloaded via mobile phone connection to a computer, said Sven Teske, energy campaigner of Greenpeace Germany.

"We already believe there is wind potential in Pulupandan and if it is confirmed by the research assessment, Greenpeace will work hard to find investors for a wind farm in the town," he said.

LEONCIO BALBIN/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

NO TO DRUGS
Mascots of the nationwide campaign against illegal drugs bring their cause to Candon, Ilocos Sur after the campaign's launching in Quezon City.

CBCP urges people to ensure clean, honest polls

PANGIL, Laguna—The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), in a pastoral statement dated Jan. 26 and issued only yesterday, has urged the youth, teachers, Philippine National Police and Armed Forces of the Philippines to perform their roles in the forthcoming 2004 national elections uprightly to ensure clean, honest and meaningful electoral exercises in May.

Most Rev. Fernando R. Capalla, CBCP president, said in the pastoral statement: "Let us encourage the teachers, the youth, the police force, military people, and others directly involved in the elections to exercise their roles uprightly ... We have to believe in our own power to transform society."

Capalla said clean and meaningful elections and transformed politics depend on ordinary people and on each one. "We start with our own values and attitudes."

The concurrent archbishop of Davao admitted that, "even before the campaign season begins, the elections of 2004 have already been poisoned by a climate of confusion, cynicism, and loss of credibility."

"More than ever, political patronage, pay-offs and personalities dominate our electoral process, not principles, party platforms and genuine people's participation."

"We have to uphold the constitutional process of the rule of law. Clean, honest, and orderly elections are the hallmarks of a working democracy."

"But the freedoms we cherish are best safeguarded by a vigilant and informed citizenry during times of elections. The opposite scenario would be recourse to violence, attempted coups, and anarchy," Capalla said in the statement furnished the INQUIRER and members of the Federation of Catholic Broadcasters in the Philippines dated Jan. 26.

The CBCP president also urged the electorate to "... work together. In various parts of the country, citizens' movements for clean elections and good governance have sprung up." *Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Army exec says Aurora bets raising funds through logging

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Some political candidates in Dingalan, Aurora are raising election campaign money through illegal logging activities, an Army official said in a report here Wednesday.

Col. Jovenal Narcise, commander of the 702nd Infantry Brigade, said this information surfaced after "certain prominent personalities" in Dingalan "pressured, coerced and offered bribe" worth P100,000 so soldiers would release a truck carrying 10,000 board feet of lumber seized in Barangay Tanawan in Dingalan on Feb. 16.

The illegally cut lumber was due for delivery to a sawmill in Nueva Ecija when it was seized by Army soldiers.

Narcise said the cargo did not have permits for cutting and transport.

Regidor de Leon, DENR executive director in Central Luzon, confirmed the Army's confiscation of the hot lumber.

Narcise, citing an intelligence report, said "candidates vying for local government positions for the May election are behind the conduct of illegal logging and its transport to the lowlands to produce money for their campaign activities." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Soldiers kill 4 suspected members of kidnap gang

COTABATO CITY—At least four members of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang were killed in a gunfight with soldiers and policemen conducting operations aimed at freeing a kidnapped grocery owner in Maguindanao on Thursday, the military said yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, chief of the Army's 604th Infantry Brigade, said the slain suspects were followers of Alonto Tahir, the gang leader behind the abduction of 52-year-old Zoila Kansi of Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat.

Dema-ala said operatives of the Task Force Kansi sighted a band of armed men moving in the village of Lagaw in Sultan sa Barongis town.

But the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, already worried the military operation could trigger fresh violence in Maguindanao, said those killed were civilians caught in the crossfire.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said government troops opened fire upon reaching the village, sending residents to panic.

He said the MILF only managed to identify the first names of three of the victims as Pido, Pindot and Pino.

But Dema-ala insisted the fatalities were gang members.

He said village officials told the military that the suspects belonged to Tahir's group.

Meanwhile, Lambayong Mayor Ramon Abalos said the abductors phoned anew the victim's husband Ruben and insisted on their ransom demand.

"The kidnappers have lowered the demand from P8 million to P5 million," Abalos said.

He said the victim's family had sought the help of authorities because there was no way they could raise the money.

The Pentagon, composed of former MILF guerrillas turned bandits, is the biggest kidnap gang operating in Central Mindanao. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Soldiers told: Keep mum on candidates

BUTUAN CITY—With the campaign season heating up, a top military official in Northern Mindanao ordered soldiers to keep silent about their preferred candidates.

Maj. Gen. Samuel Bagasin, head of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based in Cagayan de Oro, said soldiers might influence the outcome of the polls if they make their choices known.

"We should not discuss our personal choices because strictly speaking that's electioneering," he said.

He said the ban on political discussion covers soldier-to-soldier talk.

Bagasin said he would punish soldiers violating this rule. But he did not specify what type of punishment awaits the violators.

He said instead of wasting their time on politics, soldiers must spend their energy in ensuring that the elections would be honest and peaceful. *Franklin M. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Baguio to allow bets to join flower festival parade

BAGUIO CITY—City officials will not impose strict guidelines against campaigning during the 9th Baguio Flower Festival opening parades on Saturday and Sunday, and that's good enough reason for at least two presidential candidates to come here this weekend.

Concerned about disruptions during the festival's street dancing and floral float parades, city tourism officer Benedicto Alhambra earlier proposed restrictions for candidates, including prohibition on distribution of campaign leaflets during the parades.

Ramon Dacawi, city information officer, said candidates who arrive on time would be provided space in the designated lead row of street performers, with whom they can dance or play Cordillera musical instruments.

Former Education Secretary Raul Roco will join the Feb. 21 street dancing parade, after city officials took a ribbing for their decision to use new festival shirts that are similar to Roco's campaign colors, the INQUIRER learned.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will also return with the complete senatorial slate of the administration coalition K-4, according to the Philippine Information Agency in the Cordillera.

Actor Fernando Poe Jr., the standard-bearer of the opposition's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, has decided to avoid the parade, but is visiting Baguio next week, said lawyer Edgar Avila, the KNP's mayoral candidate here.

But some officials said they would "gently" advise the candidates against disrupting the parades.

Councilor Edilberto Tenefrancia, festival's program director, said Ms Macapagal would lead the parade as the festival's guest of honor.

He said the government had been wary about turning the festival into political rallies because of the increasing number of tourists and residents who watch the parades.

"My concern is public safety... We discourage candidates from moving toward the crowd during the festival because we don't want a stampede," he said.

He said the candidates would be discouraged from carrying campaign streamers.

To compel the candidates to follow the rules, the city government has decided to restrict the movements of all reporters covering the candidates to the left lane of Session Road.

"If we make sure they are photographed as they walk down the road, then the candidates will no longer attempt to break into the crowds," a government security officer said.

But Tenefrancia said the government would only make suggestions to avoid any hints that they favor administration candidates.

All the candidates will be asked to show up at the parade's assembly point at the Baguio Convention Center, 30 minutes before the 2 p.m. street dancing parade on Feb. 21. The Feb. 22 floral float parade will start at 9 a.m.

Candidates who fail to beat the assembly time will be asked instead to proceed to the Athletic Bowl at Burnham Park, where the parade will end.

The city will also monitor the candidates' individual campaign caravans. Officials are concerned that organized campaigners could position themselves among the crowd, where they could also disrupt the activity. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Suspected Abu Sayyaf gunmen seize daughter of soldier in Jolo

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Suspected Abu Sayyaf gunmen yesterday snatched the daughter of a Marine in downtown Jolo while the girl was on her way to school, the military said.

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, said Rachel Guhit, 7, was to attend classes at the Notre Dame Elementary School and was on board a *trisikad* when the undetermined number of suspects snatched her around 7 a.m.

Salazar said the trisikad driver identified as Salip Abdulla tried to prevent the armed men from getting the girl but one of the suspects shot and killed him.

Salazar said the kidnappers immediately withdrew toward Kasanyangan village.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko initially refused to comment on the abduction.

But he later said rescue efforts were underway.

Kyamko also said suspicions that the gunmen belong to the Abu Sayyaf were still being checked.

Guhit, daughter of M/Sgt. Eddie Guhit of the 3rd Marine Brigade based in Sulu, was the first kidnap victim in Western Mindanao this year.

The abduction occurred following military pronouncements that the bandit group had been effectively demolished. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

TOUGH SECURITY VAL HANDUMON
President Macapagal-Arroyo defies security threats as she continues in her campaign in a recent visit to Mindoro Oriental, where soldiers are battling communist guerrillas.

Processors of meat seek pork imports

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The woman who pioneered Pampanga's meat-processing industry urged Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. on Wednesday to reject the clamor of hog raisers for a continued import ban on pork from South Korea.

Lolita Hizon, 66, took the cudgels for the Pampanga Association of Meat Processors (Pampro) that hinged hopes for an industry rebound on Lorenzo's recent order allowing the resumption of importation from about 20 accredited slaughterhouses.

"Secretary Lorenzo should decide on who to help first. I believe the hog-raising sector also needs help but we need the help soon or else this industry is certainly bound to collapse," Hizon, owner of Pampanga's Best, said.

The order came on Friday as Pampro's 19 member-companies suffered the impact of pork shortage. They slashed the volume of production by half, resorting to work rotation to avert lay-offs from among 3,000 employees, Hizon said.

She said she had not seen this happen since she established in 1967 the Pampanga's Best, the company that set the ground for the local meat-processing industry.

According to Hizon, Lorenzo initially doubted if the scarcity was real in Pampanga and if a ban was actually enforced. Lorenzo, she said, could be right on the last assumption because her recent visit to South Korea confirmed there was no official ban.

She could not tell if there was a trading bloc that worked to prevent the entry of imported meat from "safe" sources.

"He seemed disbelieving at first (on the shortage). If I were to treat the problem, I'll treat this like I'm dealing with a person that's on the brink of death, that there is an emergency," she said.

Hizon said she hoped Lorenzo would end the rounds of dialogues he had been holding with stakeholders.

"Hasn't he heard enough? There had been several meetings. But my question now is, 'Who's going to catch the ball?' Our problem now is like a ball that's floating. The sooner he acts, the better it is for all us," she said.

"There had been ups and downs in the supply but the shortage had never been this extreme," said Renato Tayag Jr., Pampro's founding president and president of the meat processing company Mother Earth.

On the weekend that Lorenzo heeded their appeal, the pork stocks of meat processors dwindled to less than 3 percent of the daily requirement of 1,500 kilograms.

This was the lowest stock on record since June last year when the largely import-dependent meat processors complied with restrictions against cholera-plagued hogs in some slaughterhouses in South Korea.

Only the supply of local carabeef and buffalo meat from India were relatively stable, Hizon said.

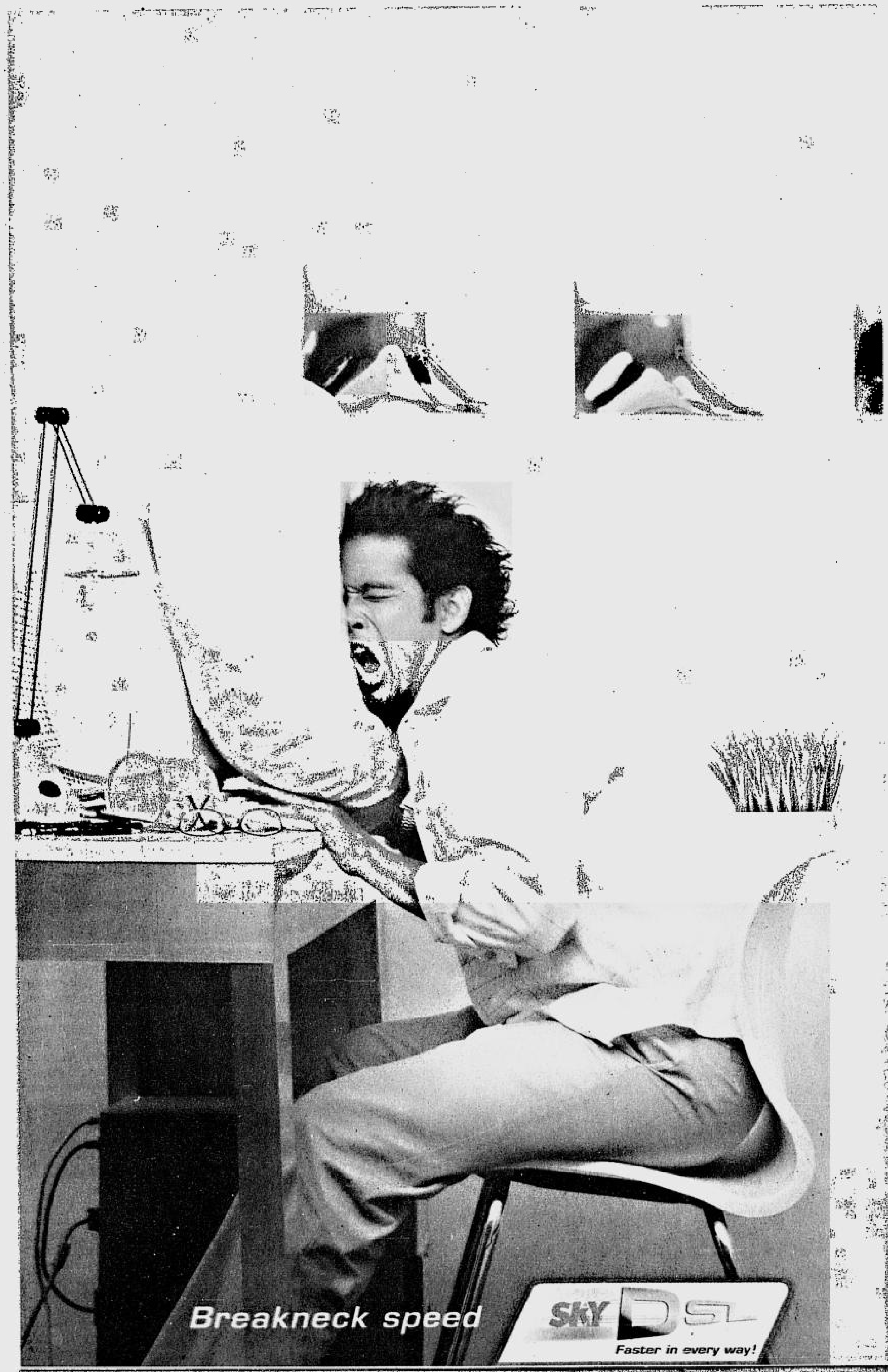
But shifting to local pork was unreasonable, said Tayag.

The farm gate prices of live pig rose to P82 a kg. Boneless and skinless pork is sold at P150 a kg in the wet market, which gets 80 percent of what hog raisers produce.

"In the history of the Philippine hog industry, I think these have been the highest (prices)," Tayag said.

He said the price increase was the result of the increase in the price of local yellow corn and imported soya bean, the main ingredients in livestock feeds.

The low supply of local pork until this month came as backyard raisers deferred production on the heels of lower prices starting the third quarter of last year, he said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



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NBI exec OKs graft raps vs governor

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has recommended the filing of graft charges against Sarangani Gov. Miguel Escobar, Vice Gov. Felipe Constantino and 26 other people including board members, officials and employees for their alleged involvement in a multi-million fund scam in the province.

Norman Decampong, executive officer of the NBI's anti-graft division who conducted an investigation of the reported fund anomaly last year, said Escobar has allowed illegal disbursements to bogus and non-existent cooperatives.

Constantino, he said, should be charged with 13 counts of graft, 14 counts of falsification of public documents and two counts of indirect bribery for his participation in the scam.

Decampong also recommended the prosecution of board members Juanito Purisima, Margie Rudes, Hernando Sibugan, Lelibeth Canillo, Redempto Abiso, Jesus Desedilla, Teodoro Diaz, Eugene Alzate, Marlind Marcelo, Pyang Singcoy and Cornelio Martinez for graft and falsification of documents.

Malungon town Vice Mayor Reynaldo Constantino, son of the vice governor, was also included in the NBI recommendation for allegedly violating the anti-graft law particularly its provision on indirect bribery.

Others recommended for prosecution were provincial administrator Perla Maglinte, provincial accountant Maria Camanay, Constantino's daughter and chief of staff Amelia Zoleta, whistleblowers Mary Ann Gadian and Sherryl Desiree Tangan, Tenante Dialawi, Alexis de la Cruz, Eleanor Tiblani, Gina Alforque, Jaimie Besmanos, Eduardo Rangel, Umbra Macaglas, Normito Malinao and Moner Mangelen.

Audit report

Decampong said his evidence included a final audit report from the Commission on Audit (COA).

In its audit report, COA claimed that last year, the province released more than P50 million to various cooperatives and people's organizations as financial assistance and grants.

Out of the total amount, the provincial government managed to account for about P3 million.

Decampong also said he had secured the sworn statements of Gadian and Tangan, disbursement vouchers and other related documents submitted by COA, including a letter from the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) dated Sept. 16, 2003.

In the said letter, the CDA certified that most of the cooperatives that received money from the provincial government were non-existent.

In several media interviews, Escobar described as purely concocted and politically-motivated the charges leveled against him and other officials.

Soc Grafilo, provincial assistant information officer, said they have yet to receive a copy of the NBI's report. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Mayor orders closure of 2 radio stations

CAUAYAN CITY—Mayor Caesar Dy on Tuesday ordered the closure of two radio stations here for their alleged failure to submit required land conversion papers needed for the issuance of a zoning clearance.

But the officials of the dzNC-AM Bombo Radyo-Cauayan and its sister station dwIT-Star FM described the closure order as a form of harassment because some of their commentaries had been critical of local officials and members of the Dy political clan.

In 2002, the stations were also served with a closure order for their supposed failure to comply with guidelines on the renewal of business permits.

"The radio officials were given almost a year to complete their land conversion papers needed for the zoning clearance and for the renewal of their (business) permits, but our plea fell on deaf ears," Dy said.

City Administrator Chito Mir served the order on Tuesday.

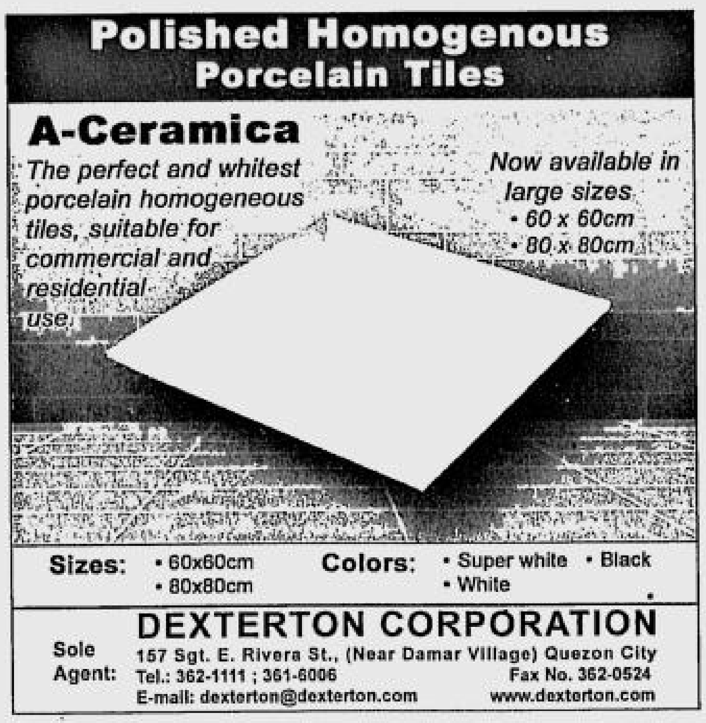
"(There is) nothing personal or political here. It is just part of the job. We just want businesses without renewed licenses to follow rules and regulations in the city," Mir said.

Charmy Sabigan, dzNC station manager, said the closure order was meant to stifle freedom of the press. She said they would continue doing live broadcasts despite the closure order.

She said the company has acquired the necessary papers for the renewal of their business permits and she was surprised when they received a final notice of closure on Feb. 16.

"For the past five years, except in 2002, we have been getting zoning certifications and yet (we were confronted with this issue again)," Sabigan said.

Dy said he planned to file disenfranchisement proceedings against dzNC-AM. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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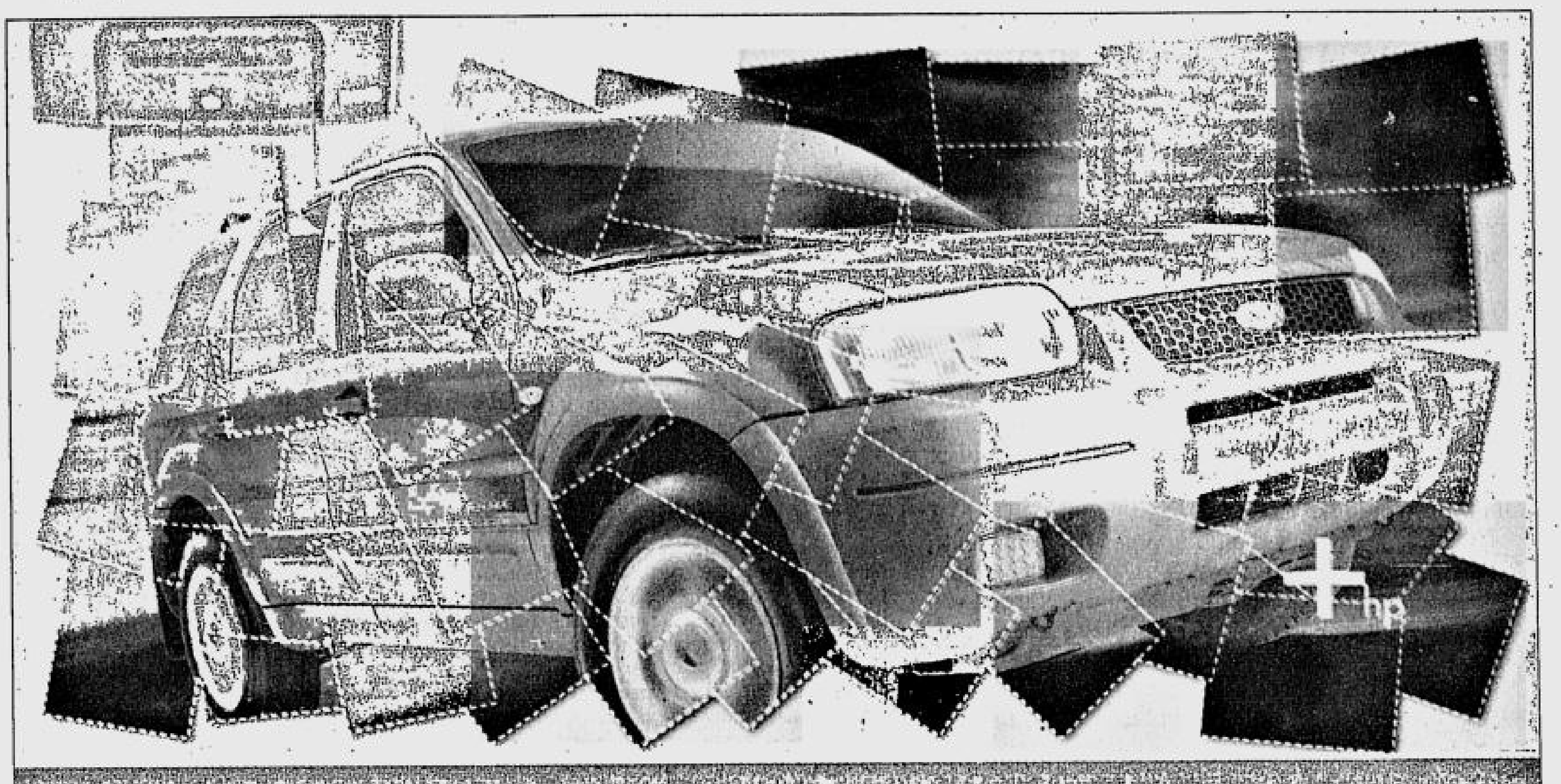

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Draw Date	Area	Deadline for submission of entries	Prizes per area
1st Draw March 19, 2004	GMA/LUZON and VIS/MIN	March 15, 2004 (store close)	(7) Nike GCs worth PhP 2,500.00 (1) Rudy Project Kerosene Shades (1) Nokia 3200 (1) Home Entertainment System from Sony (DAV-SA30, TV-BT21N40)
2nd Draw April 21, 2004	GMA/LUZON and VIS/MIN	April 15, 2004 (store close)	(7) Creative LX200 MP3 Player (2) HP IPAQ h2210 Pocket PC (1) Sony Ericsson P900
Grand Draw May 28, 2004	Nationwide	May 15, 2004 (store close)	(10) HP IPAQ h1930 Pocket PC (1) 2003 Ford Escape (XLS, 4X2 M/T)

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Trigger-happy peace

EDITORIALS

THE ROAD to peace is paved with body bags. This seems to be the message of the National Democratic Front in its on-and-off peace talks with the government. After signing with the government over the weekend the Oslo Joint Statement, a tentative road map to peace that is more prayer than map, it dispatched New People's Army guerrillas to ambush a police and military convoy in Masbate and kill nine policemen.

The double talk is vintage NDF. After making a peace sign with the right hand, it pulls the trigger with the left. After toasting peace, it explodes fireworks of violence. You should at least credit them for dramatic flair.

All of this would have been all right had the NDF, NPA and Communist Party of the Philippines been playing a part in a violent action movie. But alas, they aren't. They're protagonists in a conflict that has retarded the nation for so long. Quick to the draw, they seem forever bent on slowing down the march to peace. If there's beauty in the unhurried pace of its peace initiative, it's the beauty of bodies being riddled by bullets in slow motion, like a Sam Peckinpah movie.

In the meantime, the communist movement throws its weight around as a self-proclaimed government that claims to have achieved "strategic stalemate" with the state. As a parallel government, however, all that it can show are the fascist instruments of hate and blood that are also in the hands of the state it claims to be in strategic equal footing with but morally ascendant over.

The NPA loves to proclaim that it buys its own arsenal and ammunition from corrupt military men. Is this an admission that there's nothing essentially different between the two protagonists? That in reality, they are brothers in arms? Or fellow fascists?

They are not only alike in aggressive predisposition: they are also brothers in resource mobilization. How else can one explain that much like any unscrupulous voter whose vote goes to the highest bidder, the NPA is charging candidates for "campaign permission" fees in the territories it claims to hold? Surely it is making hay while it may.

Ah, but the NPA may say that it charges tariffs as a mere measure to show its disdain for liberal democracy, the modern opium of the people. The argument is at best revealing. It exposes the Janus-face regard by the communist movement of the very notion of democracy. So the next time it bandies such fancy phrases from the Red Book such as "national democracy" and "democratic centralism," think again.

Good faith

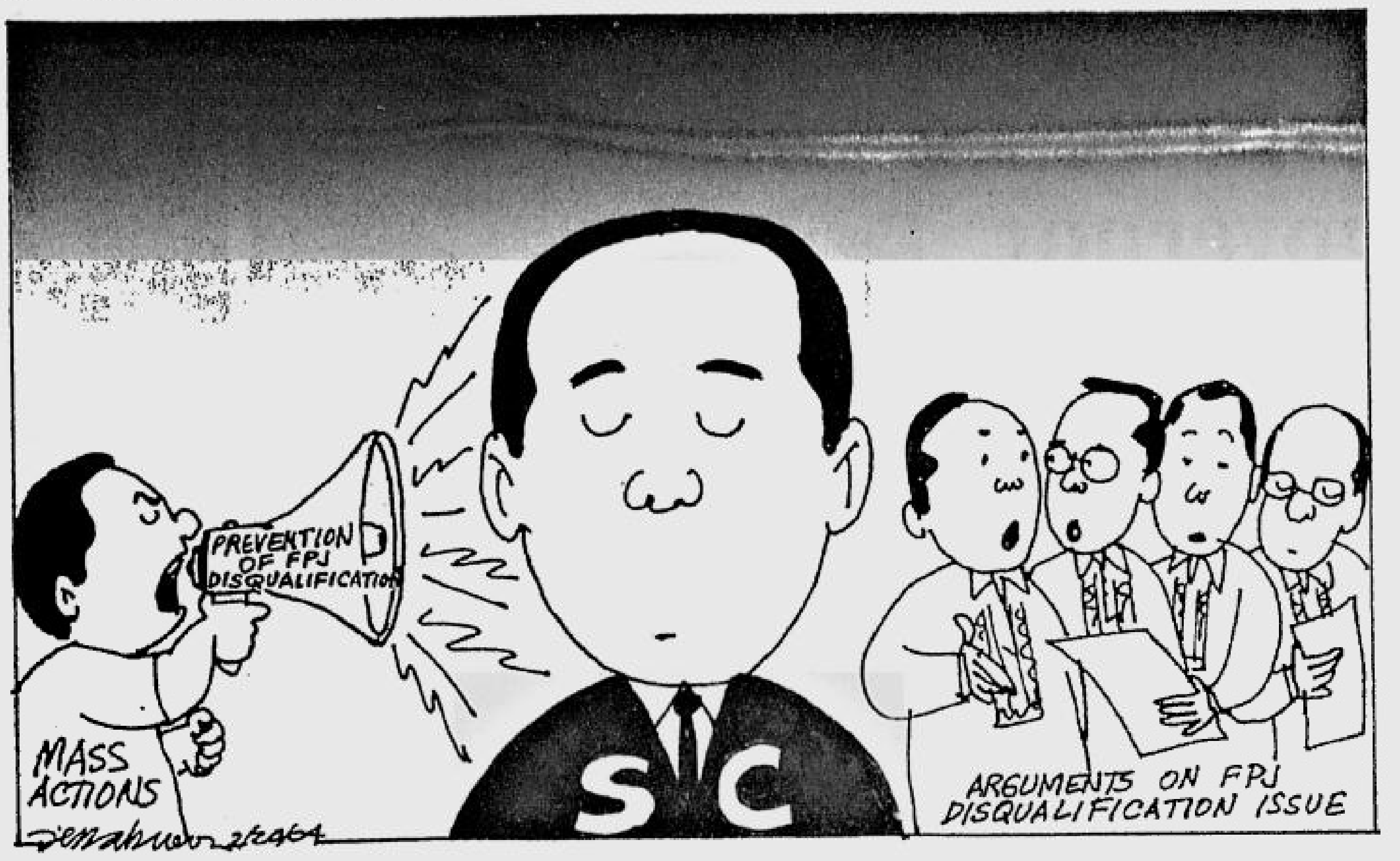
THE TREACHERY of the NDF and NPA is particularly grave when one considers that the Masbate guerrillas used a land mine to disable the convoy and kill most of the policemen. A recent Geneva Convention has banned land mines in warfare.

With the attack, which contravenes not only the Oslo accord but also an international convention, the NDF-NPA merely reinforces the terrorist tag it has earned from the United States and Europe. It gives the lie to its effort to portray itself as an alternative government that purports to represent the best interest of the people. At the least, the attack shows it can be as abusive and fascistic as the state it consistently smears and challenges.

We ourselves had expressed concern at the blacklisting of the NDF-CPP-NPA. We had argued that the communist movement is a social rebellion, not terrorism in the strictest sense. It appears we spoke too soon.

But since we know that a comprehensive solution to the different insurgencies and conflicts requires that all combatants should be invited to the negotiating table, we should treat the Masbate incident as a temporary setback. We reiterate that all protagonists should come together in the spirit of honest exchange. We urge the NDF-CPP-NPA to show proof of the sincerity required of a movement that purports to have only the best interest of the people in mind. It must show good faith.

Good faith does not mean invoking peace while scorching the earth with land mines of violence and hate. It does not mean speaking with a forked tongue, singing the paeans of peace before the press while unleashing the dogs of war in the countryside. Good faith means consistency in thought, speech and action. If the communist movement wants peace, it must first show consistency.


PREVENTION OF FPJ DISQUALIFICATION
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Don't vote for candidates with illegal posters

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

NOW is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the Commission on Elections. That body is trying to enforce our election laws—the law against illegal posters, streamers and billboards, for example. But many candidates refuse to obey it, including the top official of the land, the President no less. These illegal campaign materials are everywhere in spite of repeated warnings and a deadline to remove them. The deadline expired days ago but these illegal materials are increasing instead of decreasing. It is as if the candidates are thumbing their noses at the Comelec.

The situation will get worse. It is a chain reaction. Other candidates and their workers see the law being violated with impunity and nothing happens to the violators, so they are emboldened to do the same. It is like the arms race. Each candidate wants to have bigger and more posters and steamers than his rivals, believing that the more he has, the bigger his chances of winning. When the campaign period for local candidates begin, the mess will surely get worse if the Comelec doesn't show some muscle and will power.

The Comelec can't stop this race. It pleads lack of manpower, although it has deputized the Philippine National Police and the Metro Manila Development Authority for the job.

Besides, as soon as the workers remove the posters pasted on walls and posts, new ones are pasted there. A wall may be cleaned of ugly posters today but tomorrow morning they would be full of posters again.

The sensible thing is to prevent the pasting rather than removing the posters which is very slow work. So why doesn't the Comelec deputize the barangays to prevent the pasting, which is usually done in the dead of night? After all, the officials are already there, and the *tanods* are supposed to patrol their *barangay* at night. So if they are not goofing off somewhere, they should be able to catch the poster boys in the act. Besides, they are not doing anything, except collect *tong*, to deserve the pay the taxpayers are paying them, so *sana, pakinabangan naman sila.*

The penalty for violations is imprisonment for the workers and disqualification, fines and imprisonment for the candidates. But do we have enough prisons for the thousands of workers who would be arrested in the act? Or would the Comelec have the guts to disqualify the political big shots, including the President who is as guilty as the others?

The candidates claim that the illegal posters are being pasted not upon their orders but despite their orders to the contrary. They blame the workers and their overeager supporters, and even their rivals who, they claim, could be putting up the illegal campaign materials to discredit them and even have them disqualified. One senatorial candidate said on television that she kept telling her supporters to take down her giant billboards but they keep putting them up instead. Such cheek.

Those giant billboards cost hundreds of thousands of pesos. They require experienced workers to make and put them up. The sites of the billboards are owned or leased by billboard advertising agencies. Nobody can use them without paying these agencies first. Do you think mere supporters will spend hundreds of thousands of their own money to put up billboards for their favorite candidates?

These candidates ask for our votes. They peddle themselves as honest and law abiding. They promise to serve the people. They will take an oath to enforce and protect our Constitution and our laws. But they are already lying to the people they promise to serve and are already violating the laws they will swear to enforce.

They will continue to violate our laws until the Comelec shows backbone and makes an example of some violators. Until this happens, nobody will be afraid of the Comelec. The politicians and their workers will just laugh at it. And we will be teaching our children that they can violate laws with impunity and nothing will happen to them.

The Comelec keeps asking for help from ordinary citizens. "We cannot do this alone," says Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos. "We need your help."

Shouldn't we help them? How?

Not very difficult. If you see people pasting posters or putting up streamers, stop them. Sic the *barangay* officials on them. If they've already finished pasting, help remove them.

The posters are supposed to be pasted only in the common poster areas. They should not exceed a certain size. So all big posters and those placed outside the poster areas are illegal and can be removed.

All streamers are banned except during campaign rallies. And they are to be removed as soon as the rally is over.

All billboards, big or small, are illegal, even if they are on private property. You have the legal right to prevent people from pasting posters on your property such as walls and gates.

Finally, your *barangay*, homeowners' association, NGO, church or social group can wage a campaign urging people not to vote for candidates who have illegal campaign materials. It is only voters who can force candidates to obey the law. They violate the law in their desire to get more votes. If we show that such actions are counter-productive, they may become more law-abiding.

The view from below

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S a scene in "Riles" where candidates descend on the community along the railroad tracks. The documentary was done in 2001, which was an election year. The candidate particularly featured in it is Winnie Monsod, then a senatorial aspirant and well-known pillar of the anti-Erap campaign. Despite Winnie's attempt to convince the *riles* folk that Erap was a crook who just stole from everyone, including them, they are not impressed. And they say so in the most ardent terms.

Presidents have come and gone, they say, and some even visited them when they were still campaigning. The candidates promised jobs and livelihood. Nothing came of it. The candidates disappeared immediately after the elections, and they never saw them again, except on TV. But not Erap. Of course, Erap didn't give them jobs and livelihood either, but at least he continued to visit them long after he became president, entering their shacks and eating with them. And he distributed food. At least they got to have that.

Who cares if he stole? they say. Cory stole, Ramos stole, and nothing happened to them. As far as they are concerned, *Erap pa rin,* he was on their side.

At the time Ditsi Carolino started making "Riles," which was before the May elections of 2001, I was helping out several groups—or had been inveigled into it—promote voter education. But I recall telling people my reservations about what we were doing. My problem, I said, had to do not only with the timing of the project—I always thought the proper time for launching a voter education campaign was not immediately before an election but immediately after, well till the next one—but also with its premises. It seemed to me to reek of presumption. It presumed to know what was good for voters rather than asked questions about where they were coming from.

"Vote wisely" is the term voter education campaigns normally use. But that concept didn't seem to me as self-evident as we supposed. What was wise for the middle class was not necessarily wise for the urban poor. Or since urban poor still connoted a certain status, to people who squeezed out a living—or life itself—however they can the way farmers tried to squeeze water from dry ground during drought. "Vote wisely" merely raised the question: Wise for whom?

The *riles* folk probably represent an extreme case of destitution, but they are an exception only in degree. Most Filipinos live in a roughly similar state of deprivation. You inhabit a rat hole (that is by no means entirely metaphorical, as "Riles" shows, the denizens along the railroad tracks share their quarters with rats) and you scurry about in a constant state of worry, diligence never being enough to stave off the advances of hunger, the words "vote wisely" won't have much meaning for you. The words won't even sound complementary, they will sound contradictory. The candidates generally having no effect on your life ("They will come and go," says Eddie in "Riles," "and I will still be a *balut* vendor"), the wise thing for you is to not vote at all. The phrase for you won't be "Vote wisely" but "Be wise, don't vote." Unless you can parlay your vote into cash or kind.

None of this is to endorse or justify false prophets or to encourage a cynical attitude toward elections. All of this is to indict or arraign the real prophets, or serious candidates, for offering oracles that do not touch the poor. At least the false prophets come to seduce the folk along the *riles*, the real ones just ignore them. At least the false prophets, by breaking bread with the *balut* vendor and the knife sharpener and the *siga*, acknowledge they are there. People who breathe and sigh and harbor thoughts apart from derelicts and fugitives. The self-proclaimed real prophets, who merely tell them what to do, do not even see them. They are mere sheep that demand to be led, or butchered to make for *pulutan*.

Truly, all it takes for evil to prosper is for good men to stand by and do nothing. All it takes for fools and fire-breathers to dazzle the public is for the healers of body and soul to not go to them when they are needed.

Elections are not just a question of offering platforms or dwelling on economic and political prospects of this country, as Cielito Habito and Jose Magadia suggest, it is a question of offering hope—the real kind—by dwelling, sometimes completely literally, inside the rat holes where half of humanity lives. Or at least entering them and breathing their fetid air without throwing up, if only for a few minutes. (Have you tried walking by the *estero* along Arlegui?) Not quite incidentally, FPJ is making the same mistake as the other candidates by trotting out an economic team composed of Bernie Villegas et al. I live along the *riles* or the *estero*, I'll know by the sound of Villegas' name alone I'm being screwed.

I remember suggesting once that we do as China did to its bureaucrats and intellectuals, which was to send them to the most impoverished places of the country to do manual work. The China model of course was a drastic one, a punishment for "erring" or errant "capitalist-roaders," and we can always adopt a more benign one. But there is no substitute for knowing poverty first-hand, up close and thoroughly personal. It is the only way you'll want to do something about it with any urgency or desperation. You work in an air-conditioned office eating hamburgers at McDonald's and drinking coffee at Starbucks, you won't want to. You won't even know there's poverty around you, not even from the waiter who says in English, "Sir, you ordered for...."

Look where China is now with its tack and look where we are now with our graduates from Wharton. You can't see the poor, you'll have them forever.

Proxies for policy

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE TEAM of 19 policy advisers announced by the camp of Fernando Poe Jr. to provide brain power to his campaign for the presidency reads like a who's who in the Philippine academic community, strung together to paint a star-studded billboard to promote a new movie spectacular production. The academic credentials of the composition of Poe's "think tank" (who would not want Dean Raul Fabella of the UP School of Economics to be an adviser?) are impeccable and could give luster to any advertisement of Philippine universities and colleges seeking bigger enrollment.

There's no doubt that Fabella and his cohorts in the think tank come from a broad spectrum of disciplines ranging from economics, political science, governance, public administration, finance, urban planning, international relations and national security. All aspects of political and social life in the country are covered by this pool of expertise. You name it, and it's all there.

Poe's talent recruiters did better than former President Joseph Estrada's. They enlisted 40 advisers from a narrower band of disciplines, and Estrada's 40 "best and brightest" failed to give him a coherent direction on the economy, governance, social and political policy. But Poe, who has even a thinner base of basic schooling than Estrada, faces the same advice congestion that once gave his friend mental indigestion.

The consideration that seems to have decided the recruitment of Poe's think tank is the more the better. The Poe policy advisory team is apparently based on the notion that assembling a large number of academics can make up for the vast intellectual deficit caused by his distaste for learning starting from junior high school.

If we put the 19 advisers with their different ideological perspectives in a seminar, we can only imagine the bedlam stemming from the clash of perspectives, which would require a very skillful moderator to maintain a semblance of order. Thus, the composition of this corps of advisers gives us a sneak preview of the riot of perspectives that may be expected from a Poe Cabinet.

Clearly Poe will have good use for Dr. Bernardo Villegas, whose boom (as against gloom) economic outlook would be needed to give cheer when economic muddle sets in as a result of incoherent economic policy direction from a maestro without a basic high school diploma. Poe's talent scouts obviously thought that a team of nerds is the equivalent of policy and program.

Without doubt, the team can draft policy framework that contains economic, social and political elements that can realize Poe's vision: "a better Philippines" (whatever that means). Poe himself has not given the public a concrete picture of his economic and political "platform" aside from the fact that his goal is to put three meals a day on the table of every Filipino household, especially the poor.

His recruited advisers are no more than proxies for policy and program. These advisers may be able to explain the details of the plans they will be asked to draft, but at the end of the day, the task will end on the desk of the next president. How then can Poe explain the plans prepared by the experts unless he understands their language and jargon, developed over at least 10 years of postgraduate studies?

The experts who have agreed to join the Poe think tank should understand that they will be doing all the thinking, and should not expect any clear policy direction from their novice pupil who will need a crash course in economics and policies, before an intelligent dialogue can ever take place between them.

I have little doubt that Fabella and other academics who had served Estrada and previous presidents are motivated by patriotic reasons to help the country at a time when it needs clear direction when they agreed to join the think tank. From the looks of it, the think tank is a recipe for economic and policy disaster.

Being a presidential adviser has its own psychic rewards. It takes one on an ego trip in the corridors of power. It gives an illusion that the adviser is part of policy decision-making and of shaping national destiny—a privilege given to only a few patriotic, if not well-meaning, Filipinos. The downside, however, is that the president may not heed the experts' advice. He might prefer to listen to advice from sleazy operators about making money on the side through the exercise of presidential powers of wealth extraction via kickbacks on public transactions and rent-seeking projects.

The immediate tasks of the experts are twofold. First, they must conduct a crash course on the basics of economics and social disciplines for their employer before they can even have an intelligent exchange of ideas. This process will wear their patience thin and will be under way while the economy stumbles as economic management is plagued by trial and error. The experts will, during the learning process, be spoon-feeding their charge with pre-digested learning like feeding an infant with processed baby food to avoid indigestion.

Their second task is to produce immediately a coherent and intelligible platform that will spell out the details and the costs Poe's ambitious goal of feeding hungry mouths three meals a day. They should be expected to draw a master plan, worthy of their academic labor, that is more than the cut-and-paste pastiche announced last week by Poe's glib-tongued spin artists as a "platform."

I don't envy them.

Falling in love in Singapore

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT was quite ironic, I thought, that I would be spending Valentine's Day in Singapore, a city-state apparently so uptight it has to devise ways to get its young, educated population to fall in love, get married and beget children.

Alarmed by a falling birth rate, due in large part to the decision of many Singaporean singles to delay marriage and thereby childbirth, the Singaporean government has come up with increasingly absurd programs to "stoke the fires," as it were, of passion. From sanctioned matchmaking events to marketing a fragrance especially designed to increase one's attractiveness to the opposite sex, there's nothing the state will not do, it seems, to get their citizens to procreate and increase the country's population size and market in the future.

Judging from what I saw as I walked from my hotel down Orchard Road, Singapore's main shopping thoroughfare and the heart of the tourist district, Singaporeans seemed romantic enough. About every other couple I encountered on the afternoon of Valentine's Day seemed bent on celebrating the occasion. Women of all ages carried small bouquets wrapped in pastel tissue. Flower stands dotted every corner, as did performance artists, one of whom had painted his body gold and donned itty-bitty wings to pose as a latter-day Cupid.

But it isn't just romance and procreation on the agenda of Singaporean authorities. For even as the government seeks to speed up the country's birth rate, it wishes to do so only for a specific segment of the population: college-educated professionals, preferably of Chinese ethnicity, which is the decided majority in Singapore. There doesn't seem to be any problem among Singaporeans of Malay extraction, who notch up the highest birth rates among the city-state's three major ethnic groups. At the same time, foreign domestic helpers, most of them Filipinas, Indonesians or Indian, are required to undergo a pregnancy test every six months, and if found pregnant, will be deported immediately.

So even as the state sees nothing wrong or embarrassing about playing Cupid for its strait-laced citizens, it seems willing to play the role only for the "preferred" sort of persons, men and women who belong to the "right" professions, the "right" socio-economic status, the "right" race. And clearly, Filipino domestic helpers are not among the preferred elite.

* * *

POPULAR and even official attitudes toward Filipinos, particularly domestic help, as well as the tensions that still underlie Singapore's multi-ethnic composition are tackled in a play called "Marriage of Inconvenience."

The play was the main reason I, and two other Filipino couples—Joy and Guido Delgado and Chito and Aleli Salazar—made the effort to spend Valentine's weekend in supposedly un-romantic Singapore. The play happens to star our friend Bart Guingona as Gabriel, a Filipino male nurse who's in a relationship with Sabrina, a Singaporean doctor.

As the play opens, their relationship is approaching a crossroads. Gabriel is increasingly restless at what he feels is the shame that Sabrina feels about having him for a boyfriend, even if she denies it. But when her parents arrive prematurely from a trip to China, Sabrina is forced to confront the issue head-on, even as she tries to keep Gabriel a secret.

Complicating matters is Dizzy, Sabrina's Filipina maid, and Luisa, Gabriel's cousin, who turn the spotlight on the couple's racial and class differences while the two insist that "love will conquer all."

* * *

IF this plot summary gives the impression that "Marriage of Inconvenience" is little more than a sitcom or light romantic comedy, you got it right.

The play is written by Ng Swee San, who before joining the Writers Lab, a program to encourage Singaporean playwrights, had been a successful TV writer. Her television roots are palpable all over the play, from the quick scene changes, the stereotypical, static characters and the overabundance of clichés. Indeed, I hadn't heard so many clichés strung together onstage since I last watched a high school student production.

Director Jeffrey Tan struggles mightily to keep things light. Toward the end, a few cast members even distribute lyrics to the song "Say a Little Prayer," which the audience is supposed to sing as "guests" at Gabriel and Sabrina's wedding.

* * *

DESPITE the shallow plot and cardboard characterizations, however, "Marriage of Inconvenience" has become a huge hit in Singapore. Performances have been sold out, and Bart had a hell of a time scoring complimentary tickets for us.

True, the massive marketing efforts may have something to do with it. Our friend Bart's bearded, handsome mug is all over the place, in posters in the underground tunnels and on banners along the main roads. He has also appeared in every important talk show or celebrity gabfest.

But something else is going on here. In a culture given over to conformity and unquestioning acceptance of authority, a play that dares to tackle, even if only superficially, the delicate state of racial relations in Singapore is already considered the height of bravery. The line that drew the most laughs came toward the end, during the wedding, when the church maintenance woman says she is empowered to conduct the rites since she has an official ID from the government. When someone asked if this was enough authority, the bride's mother replies: "Don't you know that in Singapore the state is more powerful than God?"

For naturally rebellious Filipinos, that may not sound especially subversive, but Singaporeans lap it up, feeling secure in mocking their powerful state in the guise of laughter.

More than meets the eye

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THERE is something about the past that can be very reassuring in these unstable times. Looking at old photographs of the Philippines and the Filipinos evokes nostalgia for a world long gone. This may explain the popularity of Nick Joaquin's writings on Spanish Manila, the Larawan series of Bencab, and the mania for collecting antiques and Filipiniana. In the past few months, I noticed the growing number of visitors to Mayor Lito Atienza's Baywalk as well as the part of Intramuros spruced up by the Department of Tourism, and I cringe just wondering what they imagine the past to be like.

Two decades ago, I watched a pre-war film taken by an American tourist in Intramuros. It was sepia-toned and grainy, but one could see a procession from San Agustin, students in military uniform marching round the old Ateneo, calesas on the cobble-stone streets leading to the Manila Cathedral and other scenes. Naturally, there was no sound to accompany the film, no other sensory input like touch or smell to provide additional context.

Someone from the Intramuros Administration provided some commentary that would have left me teary-eyed with nostalgia, if not for an alternative running commentary from the late Teodoro Agoncillo whose reminiscences countered the enthusiasm of the man on the podium. I don't recall much of what Agoncillo told me that afternoon, but two things struck me and changed my view of Intramuros forever. Agoncillo remembered Intramuros from its smell—the scent of decay—and the mosquitoes that feasted on him there. If not for Agoncillo's intervention that fateful afternoon, all I would have to guide me were historical accounts, photographs and my romantic imagination.

Not much was left intact of Intramuros after the war aside from the small Fortin de San Pedro, outside the walls by the Muni (short for "Municipal") golf course, and of course San Agustin Church. What is now the Rizal Shrine in Fort Santiago were ruins that have since been reconstructed. Then there are those intriguing ruins in what is now known as Bastion de San Diego.

Walking around Intramuros today, one is always tempted to romanticize the past, and it was Agoncillo's memories of insect bites and a bad smell that made me realize that at the turn of the last century, Intramuros was a medieval city in a time of modernization. Anachronism is the best word to describe it. Intramuros for me is always a lesson in putting the past in context.

After going through the exhibits in San Agustin Church, my students often ask why the priest's vestments are so small. A generation that has better nutrition and access to a gym look at Rizal's clothes and wonder whether the exhibits are real because, in their eyes, Rizal was the size of a Hobbit. After walking through Casa Manila, most students are struck by the toilet. Not all people have flush toilets these days, so it is not the lack of modern plumbing that floors them but the fact that two toilet seats are placed together in one room without a partition. Not only was there a chance for socialization in the smallest part of the room, but a chess or dama board is carved between the seats to prove that there was recreation even in the most basic and private of human concerns.

Intramuros was built of stone and when one looks at old photographs, one wonders how people in those days coped with fire. Looking at photographs of the Manila Fire Department in the early 1900s provides a lot of amusement today. The firemen were in white uniform and they walked around with what looked like a manual water pump and a rolled-up canvas hose. One wonders if there was enough pressure or sufficient water to douse flames in a two-story structure.

One also looks at house construction in the past and sees that the so-called "nipa huts" are frames of wood and dried leaves. Very combustible indeed. Little wonder that in many crowded places outside Intramuros when one hut caught fire, the rest of the houses on the whole street usually caught fire.

This may explain why people were encouraged to build their huts a good distance from one another and asked to plant banana trees between them. It was thought that banana plants were a fire retardant, that in some cases when not much water in pails was available, one could throw a whole banana trunk into a burning hut and it would help bring the flames down.

The idea of challenge and response can be seen in matters of roofing. Thatch roofs caught fire and needed periodic replacement, so in the *bahay na bato* stone gave more security but the thatch roof was still a problem. The solution came in the form of those red tile roofs still popular today, but then the problem with these was that during an earthquake they fell like an avalanche and usually injured people rushing out of their homes. So the next development were galvanized iron or G.I. sheets which were fire-proof and earthquake proof. But then during a storm these flew off and thus proved potentially hazardous as well. So do we return to thatch? Not quite. One cannot please everyone.

Of course, the above comments are simplistic, but they come from the reactions of my students who were required to walk around museums and historic sites. It is good to know that many remain critical and know that there is more to things than meets the eye.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Read those labels

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE FOOD and Drug Administration (FDA) has barred the entry into the United States of some 300 products from the Philippines for failing to meeting its standards.

The barred products, as reported in BusinessWorld, include food and beverages manufactured by some of our biggest companies, including US multinationals: Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc.'s Royal Tru-Orange, RFM's White King Champorado Mix, Moo Chocolate and Ube Milk, Kraft Foods' Tang Guyabano and Ponkan C juice drinks as well as Sugarland's Eight O' Clock powdered juice, Del Monte's Italian-style and sweet-style spaghetti sauces, Philippine Beverage Partners' Jellyace snacks, Century Canning's Century Tuna, Liwayway's Oishi and Prawn Crackers, Zesto's Quik Chow Instant Pancit Canton, Leslie's Nacho Chips, Monde Denmark Nissin's Lucky Me instant noodles, Mama Sita sauces and even Universal Robina's Maxx and XO candies, Payless Instant Noodles and Nissin Yakisoba instant noodles.

A number of cosmetic and beauty products are also on the banned list, including skin-whitening products from Sara Lee and Splash, Getz Brothers' Salonpas, Johnson & Johnson's Modess and Clean & Clear Facial Wash, Kimberly Clark's Kotex and Interphil's feminine hygiene wash. Even the giant multinational Unilever was affected, with the following products barred: Leave-on hair conditioner, Closeup toothpaste, Pond's Cream, Wash and Fluid, and Vaseline Amino Collagen.

The list reminds us how powerful homegrown tastes can be even when one moves several thousand miles away. I can imagine Filipino-Americans protesting, what do you mean no more Maxx candies? Even worse, why aren't we getting Choc Nut anymore?

Note, too, a reversal of the colonial mentality. In the Philippines, we crave for "Stateside" products and yet when Filipinos finally make it to the Promised Land, there's a nostalgia for Pinoy products, from Closeup toothpaste to Salonpas. There are strange twists here as well: note the colonial mentality is still operational in the demand for skin-whitening products.

Which takes us to why the products were barred from entering the States. For the cosmetic and "beauty" (I just had to add the quotation marks this time around) products, the ban was imposed because those products were not licensed by the FDA. Some products, like those skin whiteners, will never make it through FDA requirements, whether for safety or efficacy; yet, they're among the best-selling cosmetic products here in the Philippines (just check out Mercury's shelves next time you visit and you'll find several versions).

Some of the larger food and beverage manufacturers whose products were barred have told BusinessWorld that their products are safe. Coca-Cola said they follow the same standards for production worldwide and that the ban was due to differences in labeling requirements in the Philippines and the United States.

An example of this difference is that here we only require manufacturers to indicate that food coloring has been used, while in the United States, the FDA requires that the actual name of each food coloring is indicated on the label.

But these differences in labeling requirements should make us rethink our own labeling requirements. Food coloring and other additives aren't as innocuous as we might think. Tartrazine, a yellow dye commonly used in candies, soft drinks and other foods, as well as additives such as sulfites (very common in preserved fruits) can cause severe reactions such as skin hives and asthma-like symptoms. These are not banned substances, but many countries require that labels indicate their presence in foods or beverages, as a warning to consumers who may be particularly sensitive to those chemicals.

A proper listing of all the foods that went into a package is also important. Muslims and Jews, for example, need to know if the product has any pork or pork derivatives in it. Very strict vegetarians will not take any food product with dairy or eggs.

Many of us are aware of allergies to seafoods, but there are many other common foods that can cause sensitivity reactions in some people, including eggs, wheat and the different kinds of nuts, including peanuts. As with the food coloring and additives, these foods need to be indicated on the label as a warning. (On some British food products, I've noticed they even use an exclamation point accompanied by text that reads: "Contains Nuts.")

Last Tuesday, I wrote about the dangers of excessive sodium intake because it can send blood pressure soaring. Again, a proper food label will tell you how much sodium comes with the product, and how close you're getting to the maximum recommended daily intake of 1,500 milligrams. (Lower that to 1,200 mg for people over 70.)

The Americans are also very strict about food products not making any therapeutic claims. This is important because many so-called herbal medicines are approved not as drugs but as foods, and when approved that way, they are not allowed—both in the States and the Philippines—to make any claims for preventing or curing diseases.

Recently I caught an ad on one of the larger radio stations for a herbal product, where the announcer dutifully read out, "Approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. No therapeutic claims allowed." He paused a split second then went on to enumerate something like 20 diseases that the product supposedly could cure! I could almost imagine the product label reading "No therapeutic claims allowed" accompanied by the claims.

Instead of complaining about the United States barring our products, we should pick up some lessons on proper labeling of our food, beverage and cosmetic products. Schools should be teaching students how to read these labels, including detecting hype and false claims.

THEY SAID

Vigilance at polls

"There are indeed shortcomings and threats to our democratic way of life. But the freedoms we cherish are best safeguarded by a vigilant and informed citizenry during elections."

—Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, calling for vigilance in the coming elections

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Go for what is right

THE talk nowadays is not who deserves to take the presidency but who is likely to win it in the polls.

It is very saddening to note that even those who are considered educated and experienced in government and politics have surrendered whatever principle is left in them, to the realization that eventually the choice of the vastly uneducated voters will catapult Fernando Poe Jr. to Malacañang.

Let us not lose hope.

Let us continue to knock on the minds of our voters that it is virtually suicidal to elect someone who knows nothing about economics, governance, foreign policies, administration of justice and the various ills that pull this nation down. For someone who has been in the movies all his life, even a six-year stint in Malacañang will not provide enough time for learning the rudiments of how to run this government effectively and efficiently. He will naturally run our system through advisers whose interest and loyalty are suspect.

For all well-meaning citizens of this republic who have remained hopeful and have not deserted this country in favor of Canada, United States or Australia, remember how the young David killed the giant Goliath. Losing faith and hope would be the worst that can happen to this God-forsaken country. If we continue to instill in our children's minds the value of excellent education, training and valuable work experience, then we should never tire or give up to wage a war against inadequately prepared show-biz personalities seeking public office.

Let us show to our children principle still reigns in us. And if we will sink or lose, we will not regret not having done what we thought was right for them.

—RICARDO J.M. RIVERA,
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Keep PNP away from partisan politics

THIS is in reaction to the news article by Christian V. Esguerra titled, "PNP gripe session with Ebdane gets political" which reported on the brewing dissension within the Philippine National Police. (PDI, 2/9/04)

There is a serious issue for public concern here. In spite of the PNP's recent string of successes in the fight against crime, internal strife is a fact that could eventually prove to be beyond its capability to handle. And what happens to a society whose law enforcement forces have been weakened or altogether made powerless by internal discord?

It is already appalling to learn that some officers in the PNP have actually expressed their support for this or that candidate. But it is downright frightening to realize that politics is actually being used by some of its men as a trump card in acquiring the organizational changes they're clamoring for. Such tactics sound too much like those employed by the Oakwood mutineers in last year's botched coup attempt. Please, we don't need another one; not at this time, not ever.

I believe I am not alone in making a public call to our men in uniform. At a time when politics is building up to a climax in our highly politicized country, when politicos, *trapos* or *guwapos* alike, are running like race horses just to win votes, the police should all the more show themselves as apolitical. They should rally themselves toward unity in their fight against crime rather than gathering behind some politicians. Politics should not be used by any member of the PNP, whether he be the lowly beat patrolman or some high-ranking officer, as a leverage in dealing with internal problems or as means of ensuring future favors from the powers that be.

Internal issues have to be dealt with by employing organizational processes and dynamics and by adhering strictly to the chain of command. The PNP as the very representation of "the long arm of the law," is simply too crucial and too powerful an institution for it to be shackled by rebelliousness from among its ranks. There is absolutely no need to resort to politics just to settle internal matters.

For the sake of effective law enforcement, and of ensuring long-term victory over crime, the police should just stay away from politics.

—DENNIS O. TEMPORAL,
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LETTERS

Philippine Daily Inquirer

Circus 2004

THE 1998 electoral contest in the Philippines, where about a dozen candidates vied for the presidency, was viewed by other nations as a circus with no comparison. This time around, the aspirants of the coming elections would probably be branded as political comedians and comediennes by the same foreign observers/reporters.

The Merriam Webster School Dictionary gives "circus" four distinct definitions. Two of these four best describe the coming elections: (1) "a usually traveling public entertainment that features clowns, acrobats and animal acts," which most fittingly applies to our "*trapos*" (traditional politicians); and (2) "an activity suggesting a circus especially in being a showy public display" which political campaigns definitely are.

Can there be any other way to describe our politicians today? Some of them are compared to a skillful trapezist swinging from one rope (party) to another, wherever his/her chances for political survival is perceived to be better.

Personally, I would rather vote for the unlearned but meek, humble, honest, disciplined, undisguised, incorruptible individual than the educated whose ulterior motives are self-serving. I will vote only for the one who can help me and my country from continuous sufferings, and not for someone who always renege on his/her promises. I will just take my Uncle Juan's advise and vote wisely.

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Bring back DAO 17 version

I AM writing in behalf of Kilusang Mangingisda, Tambuyog Development Center, Anak Balayan of Batangas and the Kunaman Mactan Channel Multisectoral Council.

These groups, part of the estimated 3 million small fishermen throughout the country, are bringing to President Macapagal-Arroyo's attention their urgent concerns over the issuance of the Department of Agriculture Administrative Order 01-2004 by Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo on Jan. 14, 2004, effectively nullifying DENR Administrative Order No. 17 or DAO 17.

The DA's DAO 1 violates the very intent and spirit of DAO 17 which gave preference to poor, marginalized fishermen by reserving 15 kilometers of municipal waters for their exclusive use, as mandated by Republic Act 8550 of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998.

DAO 1 adopted instead the "seven (7) fathom depth curve formula" and junked the "archipelagic principle" espoused in DAO 17. In an archipelago such as the Philippines, this means depriving some 70 percent of our small fishermen of the exclusive right to fish on rich fishing grounds.

The archipelagic principle is also upheld by the Constitution and sustained by international agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (Unclos).

When Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun revoked DAO 17 on March 17, 2003, at least 60 fisherfolk and rural organizations and some 40 NGOs, academic institutions, social reformers and party-list groups protested this move

It is widely known that DAO 17—which I issued on June 11, 2001, in my capacity as environment secretary—was revoked as a concession to big businesses.

Now, after months of negotiations and consultations with the DA-BFAR for the new DAO, the NGO community feels cheated because the DA issued a watered-down DAO 1, disregarding their appeal for the government to "Adopt DAO 17 in toto."

I join our country's small fishermen, the ultimate victims of the DA's DAO 1 in pleading for prompt action against this oppressive order that will only benefit those who, from the very beginning, have sought to deprive them of their simple livelihood.

We ask President Macapagal therefore, to scrap the DA's DAO 1 and consider restoring DAO 17 in its original form and intent.

—HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ,
former senator
and environment secretary,
Unit 1203 Gotesco
Regency Tower B, Natividad
Lopez St., Ermita, Manila

Another vet widow's pension

THIS refers to the letter of Zosima Blando-Dizon of Caupasan, Dinglas, Abra regarding the unpaid old-age pension of her mother filed way back in 1997. (PDI, 11/24/03)

I agree with all that Dizon stated in her complaint. It was also true in the case of my mother, Rosario R. Pacheco, widow of my father, Col. Mariano Pacheco, veteran of World War II, whose application for old-age pension was received by the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office . on March 26, 1998. Despite several follow-ups, our compliance with additional requirements, like the submission of a certified copy of her birth certificate which we had to secure in Baliuag, Bulacan (we submitted one to the PVAO several decades earlier), the PVAO's promises of the arrival of the additional old-age pension never came. My mother waited in vain until her death in July 2002. Two years before she died, we accompanied her to personally follow-up the claim at PVAO, Quezon City.

We, the living children, cannot fathom the callousness and inhumanity of people managing the PVAO. Perhaps this also reflects the attitude of our government officials toward our aging veterans and widows of the departed ones. May God have mercy on the souls of these officials.

—MINDA PACHECO TABORA,
San Pedro cor.
San Pablo Streets,
Lagao, General
Santos City 9500

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
MANILA

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Prospective distributors / dealers may secure eligibility requirements and bid documents from the Secretariat, Committee on Bids, Property Division, Supreme Court, after payment of a non-refundable fee of Eight Hundred Pesos (P800.00). For additional information contact the Secretary, Atty. Ennar C. Cabanilla at Telefax 4042731 or Norma C. Josue at Telefax 5247425

I. SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The legal requirements for eligibility of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative on February 27, 2004 at exactly 2:00 p.m., 3rd Floor, Session Hall, Old Bldg., Supreme Court.

II. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference of eligible bidders shall be on March 3, 2004 at 2:00 p.m., 3rd Floor Session Hall, Old Bldg., Supreme Court.

III. OPENING OF BIDS

Bids of eligible bidders will be accepted and opened in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives on March 17, 2004 at 2:00 p.m., 3rd Floor, Session Hall, Old Bldg., Supreme Court.

The Committee on Bids reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities therein, or accept any bid/s or offer/s which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to the government.

February 12, 2004.

(Sgd.) JOSE P. PEREZ
Chairman
Committee on Bids

(PDI–February 13 & 20, 2004)

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Schedule of Bidding Activities

Issuance of Eligibility & Bidding Documents	February 19, 2004 - March 9, 2004 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM SRA Bidding Secretariat 3rd Floor Annex Building Sugar Regulatory Administration North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City for a non-refundable fee of Php 1,000.00
Pre-Bid Conference	February 25, 2004; 9:00 AM Social Hall, Sugar Regulatory Administration North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Submission & Opening of Eligibility & Bid Envelopes	March 11, 2004; 9:00 AM Social Hall, Sugar Regulatory Administation North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

All particulars relative to the Eligibility, Bid bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contracts shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and other applicable government rules and regulations.

The SRA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bids.

The SRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality therein or accept any bid(s) or offer(s) which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to the government.

(Sgd.) JAMES C. LEDESMA
Administrator

(PDI - Feb 13 & 20, 2004)

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Bro. Eddie slams Malacañang anti-graft body

From page A1

government, the PAGC has been selective in going after government officials suspected of involvement in graft or of having used their positions to materially enrich themselves.

Villanueva launched his broadside at the PAGC during an interview on the sidelines of the Kilos Kultura Para sa Kinabukasan, an event held at the Folk Arts Theater and sponsored by Filipino artists.

"It is directly under the Office of the President. Everybody knows it is not independent. Just look at the name," he said of the agency chaired by Dario Rama.

Nothing happens

"If a person involved in corruption is in the Office of the President, Malacañang can influence that," he said. "We know; we have seen from the past. There have been so many scandals but nothing ever happens."

Villanueva said he was not just referring to the "Jose Pidal" money-laundering controversy allegedly involving President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, but others concerning Cabinet members as well. He refused to name names, however.

The PAGC had met with opposition from the Palace in at least one prominent case.

Nani Perez case

Last month, it recommended that charges be filed against ex-Justice Secretary Hernando Perez in connection with his issuance of an official memorandum in November 2002 barring the Bureau of Immigration from divulging, without his approval, the travel records of the President, Vice President, Cabinet members and lawmakers.

But Malacañang cleared Perez, a close ally of Ms Macapagal's, based on a recommendation by a "committee of peers" that threw out the PAGC recommendation for supposed lack of merit.

VILLANUEVA: Everybody knows it (PAGC) is not independent.

A PAGC ruling in 2003 said Perez's memorandum violated the Constitution, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials, the Administrative Code of 1987 and Presidential Decree No. 1829.

Old politics

Villanueva, standard-bearer of the Bangon Pilipinas Movement for National Renewal, also took a swipe at other presidential candidates who, he said, had "billions" to spend for their campaign.

"We do not do old politics," he declared. "We do not have huge funds like the billions that you get from drug lords, smuggling lords, gambling lords. We cannot do that; if we do, we will sell the country again."

Villanueva said that if elected, he would install an independent commission against corruption modeled after the anti-corruption body in Hong Kong, which, he said, was the key to the territory's clean government and subsequent economic progress.

Absolute powers

Villanueva said the proposed commission would have "absolute powers" to rid the government of corruption and would not be attached to any government agency to allow it the freedom to do its job.

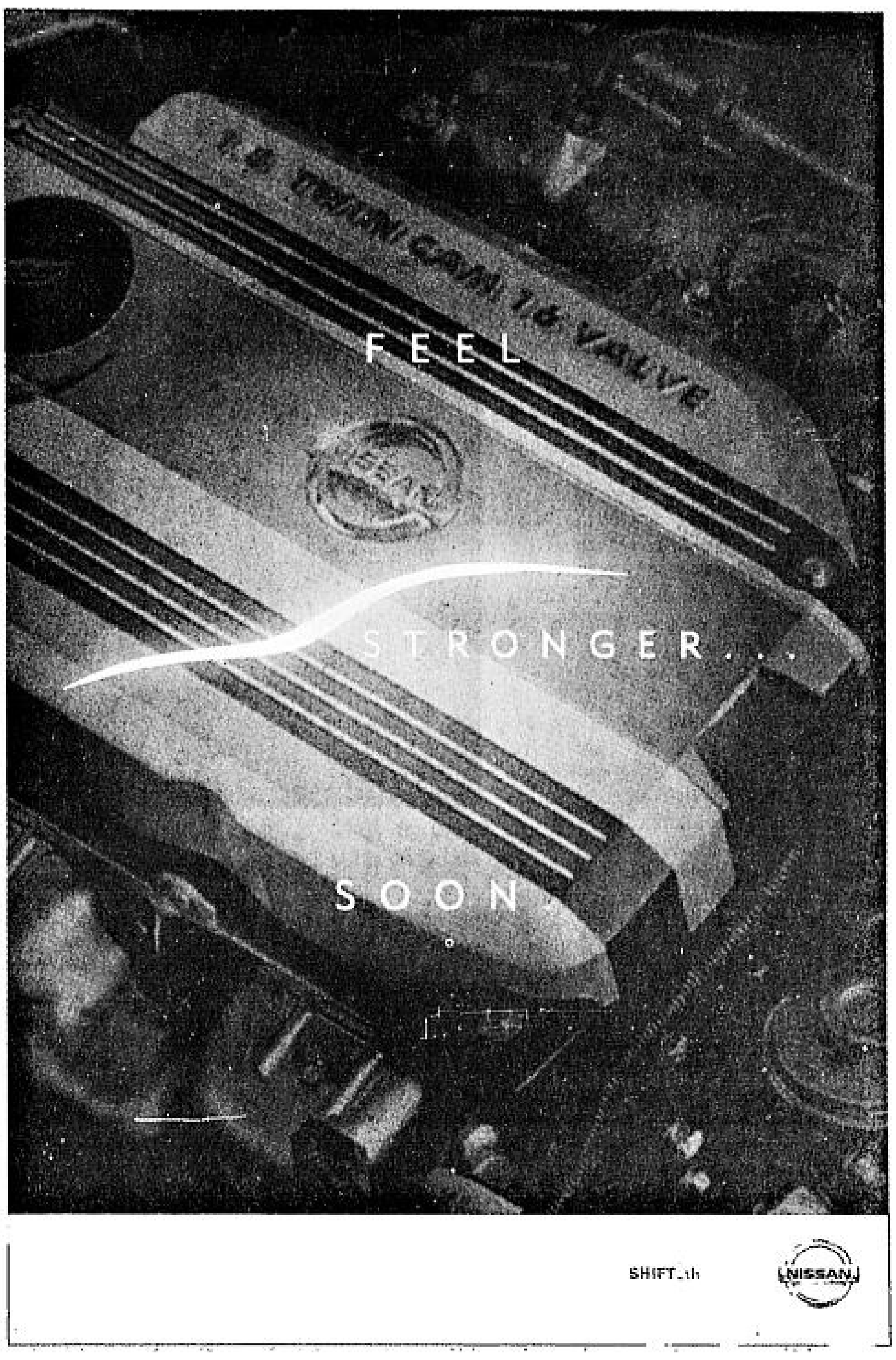
He also said the Office of the President would not be exempt from close scrutiny.

"Previous administrations were scared to put up [such a commission]," he said. "No president, unless really determined to battle corruption, would do it."

Villanueva, who has enjoyed access to Philippine leaders because of his prominence as an evangelist, said he had earlier suggested the establishment of such a commission to various presidents, including the incumbent, but that they did not even study the proposal.

He said the planned commission would be led and staffed by people of competence, integrity and political will to destroy the apparatus of corruption in government, and who would not be hostage to any interest.

It will be operated like the Office of the Ombudsman, which has its own budget, he said.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Ping backs ...

From page A1

Negros Rep. Apolinario Lozada, former administration party stalwart, as his party's candidate in the congressional race in the province's fifth district.

Lozada is running against Ignacio Arroyo, who had rushed to the rescue of his brother, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, in the Jose Pidal scandal that Lacson exposed six months ago.

The current chair of the House committee on foreign relations, Lozada resigned as vice chair of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats on Feb. 8 after party leaders picked Arroyo over him as official candidate.

Announcing the LDP move that capped the Western Visayas phase of his presidential campaign on Wednesday, Lacson told reporters: "(Lozada and I) have one thing in common—we are both against Jose Pidal. He is against the imaginary Jose Pidal, while I am against the real Jose Pidal."

No kidding

Though he seemed amused by the distinction, it was clear he wasn't kidding.

"Jose Pidal" was the name of the controversial bank account that Lacson attributed to Mike Arroyo in a three-part exposé that started in August. The account was said to contain millions of pesos in laundered money.

Ignacio Arroyo, also known as "Iggy," promptly claimed ownership and effectively halted a Senate probe of the account by invoking his "right to privacy." Several senators are seeking to revive the inquiry.

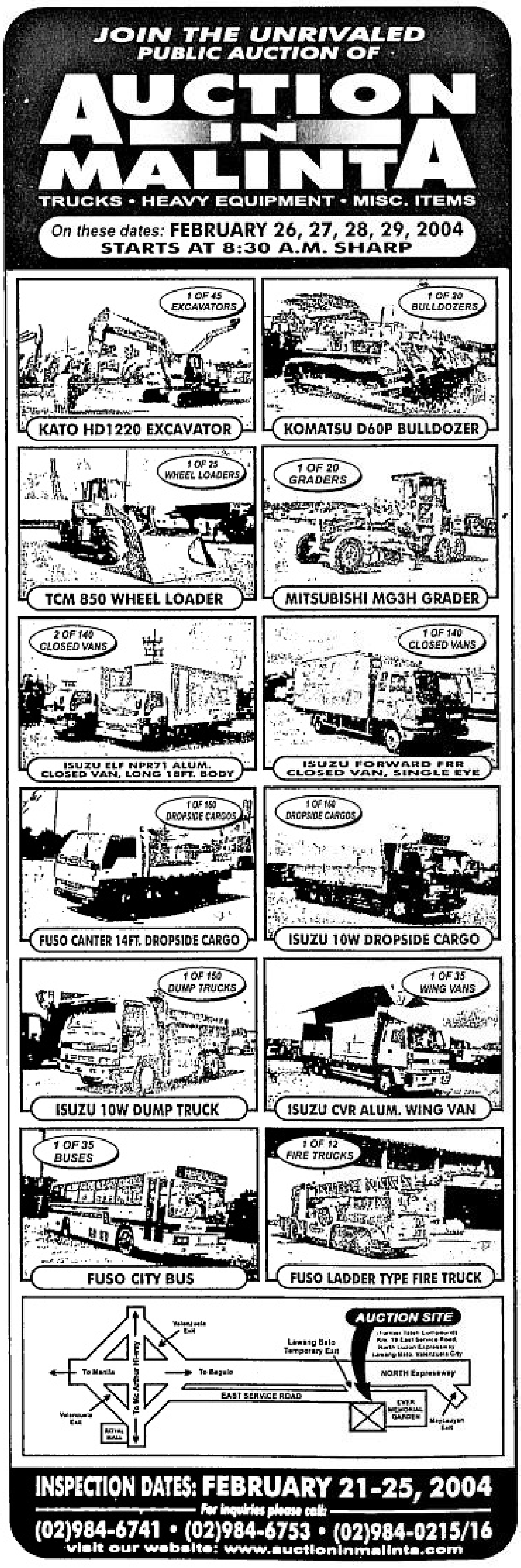
On Wednesday evening, around 50 supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo picketed the L'Fisher Hotel, where the LDP group was staying. They were dispersed before Lacson arrived from the wake of a campaign volunteer who died in a vehicular accident the previous night.

Survey 'a farce'

An earlier survey showed Ms Macapagal leading in Western Visayas. Lacson said the reception accorded his party in the provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo and Negros Occidental proved that the survey was "a farce (just like) any survey that shows GMA is ahead."

His trip was "a gamble that paid off," Lacson declared. "The public's response to us did not reflect what they're saying."

He was not a big believer of surveys, the senator stressed. Otherwise, he wouldn't have run for the Senate in 2001, he said, since he never made it to the "Magic 13" in any pre-election survey at the time.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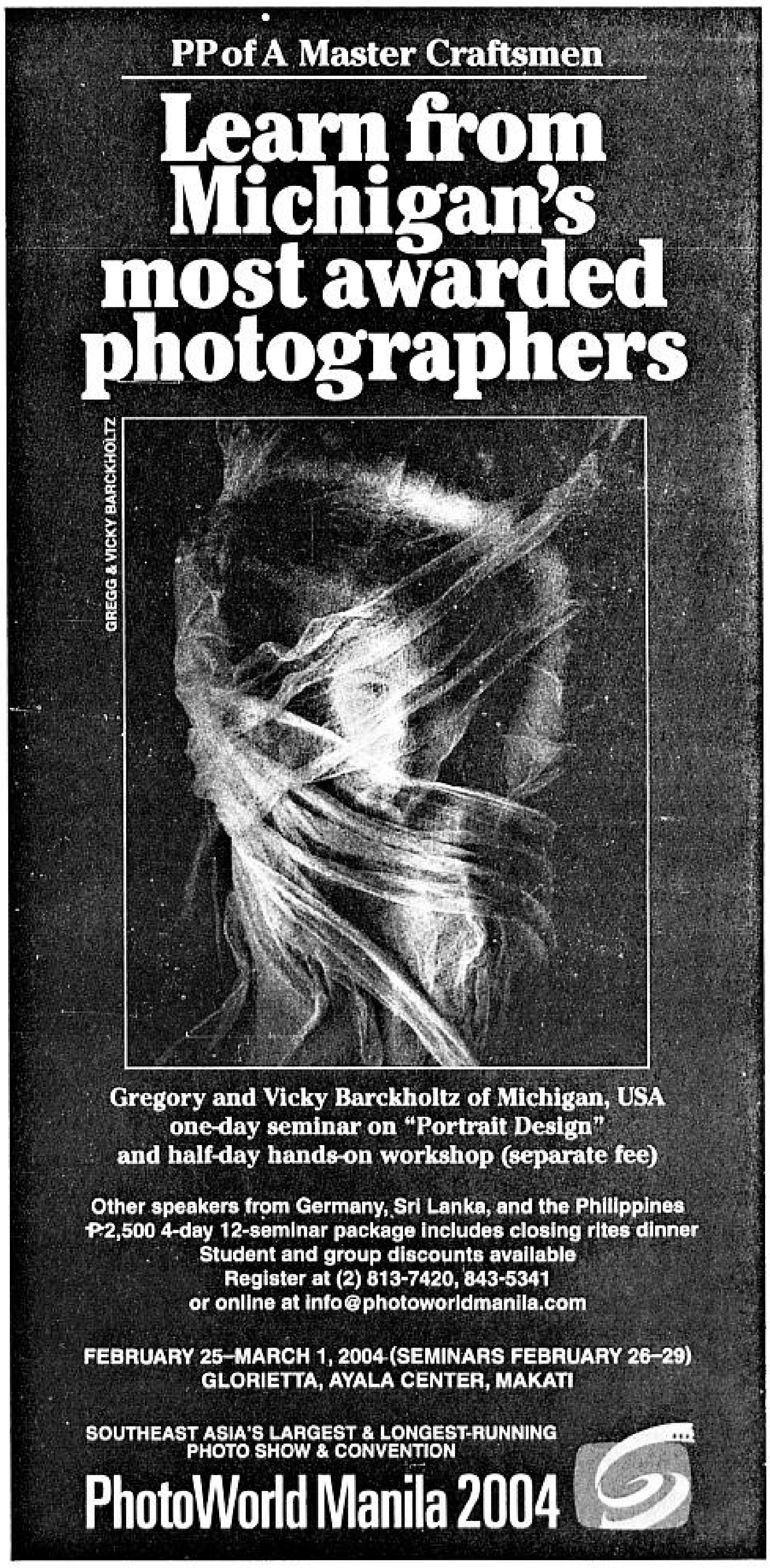
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FPJ defiant; cops break up protests

From page A1

tion seeking to disqualify Poe from the presidential race. The petitioners claim Poe is not a natural-born Filipino citizen.

On Wednesday evening, Poe delivered his fightingest speech so far in his campaign for the presidency.

"They can strip me of my riches and fame but they cannot take away my being a Filipino!" he told a working class audience that packed a closed-off portion of the Circumferential-3 Road in Dagat-Dagatan, Caloocan.

On cue, a record of Kuh Ledesma's song "Ako ay Pilipino," which was commissioned by then first lady Imelda Marcos from composer George Canseco, was played after his speech.

Be calm

"What we ask of you, all of the groups here, let's listen, and be calm, whatever the decision of the Supreme Court may be," Poe's wife, former movie star Susan Roces, told the Plaza Miranda crowd.

Attired in a red blouse, Roces arrived at Plaza Miranda in a van at 12:05 p.m., surrounded by bodyguards who shielded her from fans.

Introduced as "the country's next first lady," Roces then got on the Isuzu Elf truck that served as the stage for the pro-Poe program.

With film producer Lily Monteverde by her side, Roces spoke to her husband's supporters. "FPJ would like you to know that he decided to run for president not for himself but for all of us," said Roces, adding that this decision was prompted by the people's love for her husband.

She then turned to the Supreme Court. "My appeal to the Supreme Court ... We hope you would implement what is in the Constitution. The people are depending on the protection of the Constitution," Roces said.

As they braced themselves for the Supreme Court decision, Roces asked Poe's supporters to light candles and pray for her husband.

Despite the pending question on Poe's eligibility to run for president, Roces insisted that "FPJ is a natural-born Filipino." To this, the Poe supporters cheered and chanted, "FPJ!"

Born here

At the Dagat-Dagatan sortie, Poe told some 20,000 people in Filipino that "all kinds of aspersions have been cast upon me and my family" since he joined the presidential race. The crowd repeatedly chanted "FPJ! FPJ!"

Poe declared that his parents were born, raised and buried in the country, hence there should be no question about his being a Filipino.

"I was born here, I will be buried here," Poe said, copying almost the same line previously uttered by his bosom friend, deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Estrada, currently detained and facing charges for the capital offense of plunder, used this line to dispel fears that he would no longer return if allowed to leave the country for knee surgery.

MUSLIMS-FPJ

JUST like the movies, the Plaza Miranda scene is peopled by actress Susan Roces, movie mogul Lily Monteverde and other show biz personalities solidly behind the presidential bid of Fernando Poe Jr.

EPA

A tailor?

Poe also took a dig at National Archives director-on-indefinite leave Ricardo Manapat when he talked about restoring integrity to the government.

"What's his name? Manlapat? I know that one is a tailor," Poe said of Manapat, who had been accused of falsifying the documents used to question Poe's citizenship before the Commission on Elections. Manlapat's is a high-end tailoring shop that has been around for decades.

Poe said the present government is such a failure that it cannot even provide the basic needs of the people like food, health services, shelter and education.

Poe also hit the "culture of corruption" in the government. "We need to restore not only trust and confidence in the government but also confidence in ourselves as Filipinos," he said.

Poe said governance would be restored under his watch as President. "They've told me before that this is no longer a movie. But why is it that what we're seeing now appears like the beginning of a movie?" he said.

Poe said that what the nation needed was a "leadership that cares for the people, a leadership that is responsible to the people."

No choice

Supt. Manolo Martinez, Station 4 commander, said the police had no choice but to use water cannons to drive back the Poe supporters because some members of the group began throwing stones and bottles at the policemen, although the Poe supporters denied this.

Ed Araullo, spokesperson of the Pinoy si FPJ! group, said those who threw stones were not members of their group but were probably infiltrators who wanted to make Poe's supporters look bad.

"We have no intention of causing violence. FPJ told us to respect the rule of law, and that is what we are doing. It is the police who dispersed us," Araullo told the INQUIRER, adding that the water used to hose them down smelled awful.

Araullo also said the group had initially tried to walk on the sidewalk, but the policemen blocked their way. "Where would they have us walk, in the plant boxes or center islands?" he asked.

Shouting match

Martinez and Manila mayoral candidate Mel Lopez, who joined the pro-FPJ group, had a shouting match because of the dispersal, although cooler heads prevented the argument from turning physical.

After negotiations between the police and the organizers of the protest, who included columnist Herman Laurel and Linggoy Alcuaz, the Poe supporters were allowed to march on to Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, where they met up with other pro-Poe groups, including that of Ronald Lumbao who had come from Mendiola.

Batang Panday

Niño Muhlach, president of the Philippine Action Network for the Development and Advancement of the Youth (Batang Panday), not Bantay Bata as earlier reported, said 45 organizations came together yesterday to show their support for Poe.

Among them were the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP), Assalam Bangsamoro People's Party, Association of Integrated Muslim Sectors, Metro Manila chapters of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc., and Alliance of Generals for Peaceful and Orderly Elections. They converged on Plaza Miranda in front of Quiapo Church.

The bulk of Poe's supporters, led by Lumbao of PMAP and Lopez, arrived at Plaza Miranda at 10:30 a.m. The program began shortly before 11 a.m., with a message from Armida Siguion-Reyna, who asked the people to campaign for Poe.

Poe's colleagues in show business like Rez Cortez, Efren Reyes Jr., Sunshine Dizon and Bella Flores shared the stage with leaders of pro-Poe organizations.

They took turns in telling the people that Poe was a natural-born Filipino. Pamphlets explaining why Poe was a natural-born Filipino were distributed to Poe's supporters.

From "Pandak" and "Doña Bulilit," all allusions to the President's modest height, to "an illegitimate president" who merely seized power, Ms Macapagal got the ire of the pro-Poe camp who blamed her for Poe's disqualification case.

"*Hindi mananalo si pandak* (The short one will not win). The disqualification case is the highest form of cheating. They do not know that the elections are over," said Lumbao, a leader of the loyalists of former President Joseph Estrada, Poe's close friend for over 40 years.

The Plaza Miranda gathering wrapped up a few minutes after Roces left, after the bells of the Quiapo Church rang out at noon.

Low turnout

Protest organizers had promised they would gather at least 50,000 people, but only around 2,000 protesters showed up, according to police.

Director Ricardo de Leon, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said the low turnout of protesters indicated that the public had become "mature" in dealing with threats of civil unrest

De Leon attributed the "unsuccessful" pro-Poe rallies to the preparedness of the Philippine National Police. There were at least 2,000 anti-riot policemen available in case the protesters made good their threat to stage a mass action similar to the Labor Day siege of Malacañang in 2001. But the 500-strong civil disturbance management unit of the Western Police District was enough to keep the protesters at bay, according to De Leon.

He said only around 10 vehicles joined the "Pro-Democracy Coalition" motorcade that had assembled at the Quirino Grandstand. Arnold Obina of the People's Alliance for Truth and Justice had claimed that Poe's supporters would circle the Supreme Court on board at least 40 "high-end" vehicles. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

Poe lawyer refuses to stand by proof he himself submitted

From page A1

but the many questions from the justices prolonged the oral arguments.

As of 7 last night, the justices had yet to hear from the Comelec, the solicitor general and the four amici curiae (friends of the court).

In an advisory, the Supreme Court en banc said the hearing would be extended "from day to day until terminated," if necessary.

Principal issues

The high court said the principal issues to be resolved, besides the question of Poe's citizenship, were the SC's jurisdiction, and whether the Comelec had jurisdiction over petitions to disqualify presidential candidates based on "falsity of material representation in the certificate of candidacy or lack of qualification."

Poe is an alien and not a natural-born Filipino citizen, making him ineligible to run for president, according to two petitioners seeking his disqualification from the presidential race.

Earlier, lawyers Ma. Jeanette Tecson and Fornier separately asserted before the justices that the actor, Ronald Allan Kelly Poe in real life, had not really acquired Filipino citizenship since birth.

"Fernando Poe Jr. remains an illegitimate child and an American," Tecson said.

Tecson based her assertion on only two documents, which ironically were the same ones furnished by Mendoza when he defended the actor before the Comelec against the petition filed by Fornier and his counsel, brother Victorino, that sought to cancel his certificate of candidacy based on the citizenship question.

One was Poe's birth certificate showing that he was born on Aug. 20, 1939, and the second, the marriage certificate of the actor's parents—Allan Fernando Poe and Kelly, an American—dated Sept. 16, 1940.

"Being illegitimate, Fernando Poe Jr. is an American," Tecson said. "This is also the rule under international law."

Tecson conceded that Poe's status of having been born out of wedlock could have been legitimated by the subsequent marriage of his parents.

But Tecson noted that by the time Poe's father died in 1951, there was no evidence showing that he had gone through legal processes acknowledging the younger Poe as his son.

"Poe can't be a Filipino citizen," Tecson said.

Fornier, for his part, stressed that the 1935 Constitution clearly distinguished between legitimate and illegitimate children, conferring more rights on the former.

Fornier also took Tecson's line, relying on the argument that an illegitimate child like Poe assumed the citizenship of the mother.

Fornier said that there was information that all of Poe's siblings were American citizens and that this was "admitted" to by Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III, Poe's general campaign manager.

Petitioner grilled

Tecson argued that the petition she and fellow lawyer Felix Desiderio had filed against Poe before the high court was partly based on the principle that "we (the people) have the right to know whether the president is qualified."

"We are all affected by what the president does every day," Tecson said.

Fornier said: "There may be divided loyalties."

The Supreme Court justices didn't let Tecson off easily after she delivered her prepared statement.

OVERPOWERED by the police, this protester is arrested before he can put one foot inside the gate of the Supreme Court compound in Padre Faura, Manila.

EPA/DENNIS SABANGAN

For more than two hours, Tecson was grilled on whether the tribunal indeed had jurisdiction over the case, whether the high court was being asked to declare Poe a non-Filipino, whether Poe could not be considered a natural-born Filipino, and other legal issues.

Tecson was pinned down by Justice Jose Vitug who made her admit that the interpretation of an illegitimate child of a foreign mother acquiring the citizenship of the mother was based merely on previous court decisions and not explicitly stated in law.

In favor of child

Vitug said that civil law "always rules in favor of the child" and that previous jurisprudence according the children the citizenship of their foreign mothers was based on the consideration of making life easier for children instead of "setting the rule."

Justice Angelina Gutierrez noted that the determination of Poe's real citizenship could not be based merely on his birth record and his parents' marriage certificate.

Besides, Gutierrez said, these were matters of evidence that the lower courts should handle as the high tribunal dealt only with matters of law.

Davide asked Tecson whether she had more documentary evidence to prove Poe was an alien.

Orchestrated

Tecson replied that she had only two documents.

Vitug ribbed Fornier on perceptions that there seemed to be an orchestrated effort to disqualify Poe.

Without alleging a conspiracy among the Fornier brothers, Tecson and Desiderio, and another petitioner Zoilo Velez, Vitug said: "You got yourselves pretty well covered."

"One (petition) is coming to the (high) court, one from the Comelec. You might hit one," Vitug said, eliciting laughter from the audience.

It will be recalled that Tecson and Desiderio filed their petition directly before the high tribunal, while the Forniers first questioned Poe's citizenship, although this failed, before the Comelec.

In his comment to the SC, Mendoza claimed that the tribunal could hear the case only after the elections.

Associate Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez mentioned four recent SC decisions in 2000, 2001 and 2002 which said that the eligibility of the President could be questioned in a quo warranto proceeding only after the elections.

Tecson said the tribunal could hear the case based on its decision in Javier vs Comelec, but Martinez pointed out that this ruling came out in 1986.

Martinez also questioned the petitioners' use of the SC ruling in Morano vs Vivo in arguing that only legitimate children inherit the citizenship of their fathers.

She explained that for the petitioners to use this, the case should have "practically the same" facts as in Poe's disqualification case.

Martinez pointed out that Morano vs Vivo dealt with the ownership of a vessel, a civil right, and not a political right like citizenship.

Tecson and Fornier often disagreed with the justices in the interpretation of the laws in the case that left some of the magistrates exasperated.

"We are the ones who will decide so if you disagree, that's your problem," Justice Conchita Carpio Morales told Fornier.

Meralco stockholders urged to invest more for expansion

THE STOCKHOLDERS of the Manila Electric Company should invest more money to improve the power utility's service instead of asking consumers to pay an additional P0.12 per kilowatt hour to fund its capital investments.

This was the call yesterday of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile as he reiterated that Meralco's controversial petition was not a fair return but additional investment that should not be passed on to consumers.

In a press statement, Enrile pushed for more consumer protection against "unjust, questionable and onerous" rate increases in electric power charges.

"Consumers will understand that foreign and local investors deserve a fair return on their investments and that is the key. Meralco and its stockholders led by the Lopez family must make the investment first before they should be given a return. Capital investments are responsibilities of stockholders in a public utility. Not of consumers," Enrile said.

The former senator and founding chair of Philippine Consumer Watch said the giant power distribution firm justified its need for a P0.12 per kwh rate increase so that it could finance 42 systems improvement projects. Meralco claimed these projects were necessary to improve the service to consumers, added Enrile. He is running in the coming elections to regain his old Senate seat on a platform of consumer protection against unjust and onerous power rates.

He said the Lopezes and their partners in Meralco and former Energy Regulatory Commission (ER) chair Manuel Sanchez were trying to justify a case of "frying consumers in their own lard."

Enrile pointed out that consumers have been protesting the return-on-rate base (RORB) mainly because Meralco wanted a return that included income taxes and the rate base was padded at the expense of all its consumers.

"Now, Meralco is taking the rape of consumers to a new level. The power distribution monopoly's stockholders want helpless consumers to pay for the rate base in addition to the return on their investments," Enrile said.

"If the Lopezes and their partners did not have enough capital to handle the investment requirements of a mega-franchise covering fifty areas in Luzon and Metro Manila, why did they appropriate the franchise at all?" Enrile asked.

Enrile slammed Meralco's managers for saying that the power utility giant was not making enough money and now wants consumers to pay for improvement and expansion programs whose profits will simply go to them.

'Life begins at 40...' reunion

CLASS 1964 of the Marcelo H. Del Pilar High School in Malolos, Bulacan will hold its 40th graduation anniversary reunion tomorrow at the Villa Iluminada Resort in Barangay Bungahan, Malolos City starting at 9 a.m.

About 400 of the school's graduates in the year 1964, including those now residing overseas, have been invited to attend the homecoming reunion with the theme "Life Begins at 40...years after graduation!"

Surviving teachers of the seven classes that make up the 1964 batch will also grace the occasion.

Among the most outstanding members of the class are class valedictorian Cora Tapang-Lopez, who teaches at the Assumption College; Serafin Pantaleon, senior vice president for Manufacturing of Toyota Motors Phils. Inc; and Joe B. Javier, Vice President for News & Public Affairs of ABC-5, who was Class Governor.

Ateneo-Zambo alumni election

THE ATENEO de Zamboanga University Metro Manila Alumni Association will hold its annual general membership meeting and election of the board of directors on March 13.

ADZUMMAA president Paul Pe said registration will start at 3 p.m. at the Archipelago Bldg., North Avenue, Q.C. Free snack and dinner will be served.

For more information, please contact Ms Gaea Gaetos at 0917-5325071 or Nan Hernandez at 0919-287861.

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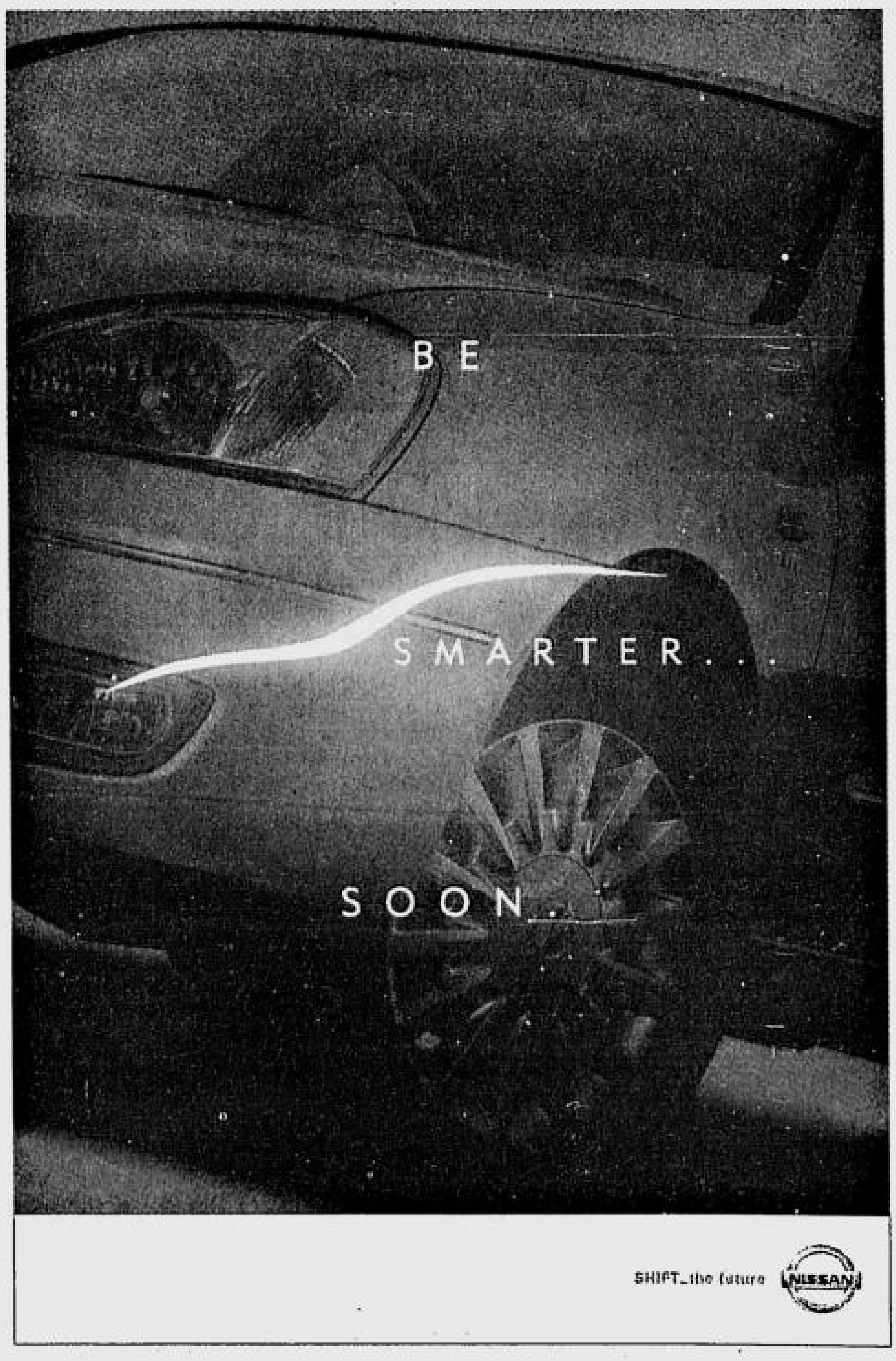

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MESSAGE

I wish to convey my warmest salutations to the members and religious elders of the **Seventh-Day Adventist Church** on the Inauguration of your television station, *3 Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN), Channel 45.*

I join the Seventh-Day Adventist Church community in celebrating this momentous event in the history of your institution. The inauguration of your non-commercial television station manifests your dedication to promote family solidarity, spiritual enrichment and positive social relations. Your adherence to the principles of truth, unity and faith contribute to the growth and development of your institution as a vehicle for encouraging our citizens to contribute to our effort of upholding peace and justice in society.

It is my earnest hope that your newly established television station will inspire the Filipino people to unite behind our efforts of establishing a strong and just Philippine Republic. In line with our thrust to create an environment of peace and reconciliation, we expect that you will continue to fulfill your mission, and will be an effective catalyst of positive social transformation and lasting progress.

Maligayang araw ng pagkakatatag, hangad ko ang inyong tagumpay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

MANILA
21 February 2004

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

February 20, 2004

For and in behalf of the Seventh-day Adventists in the Philippines particularly in Luzon, we express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the decision of the Three Angels Broadcasting Network to establish a television station in the Philippines.

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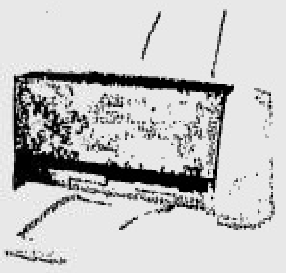
We encourage our countrymen to specially make CHANNEL 45 a PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE—for hope and for better life

God bless and Mabuhay!

North Philippine Union Mission Administration

Nestor D. Dayson *President* Max B. delos Reyes *Secretary* Tom D. Daydan *Treasurer*

Da King gets crash course in economics



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From page A1

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"We have what we believe is the most potent group of economists and planners that can be formed," said Rep. Francis Escudero, campaign spokesperson for Poe. His 11-member economic team is led by Raul Fabella, dean of the UP School of Economics.

Benjamin Espiritu, chair of the Business and Governance Department of the De La Salle University Graduate School of Business, said he joined Poe's team because he was convinced that a person without any political debt was not beholden to any vested interest.

'Depth of mind'

"I really believe we need to have an honest person in government whom the public can trust so that people will invest and pay taxes. From there, we can generate jobs and then others will fall into place," Espiritu said.

He said the country's basic problem was the lack of job opportunities. "This in turn is caused by the lack of favorable investment climate and the lack of trust in government," he said.

According to Espiritu, Poe can pursue an economic agency "that will not only bring the economy back on track but make it competitive."

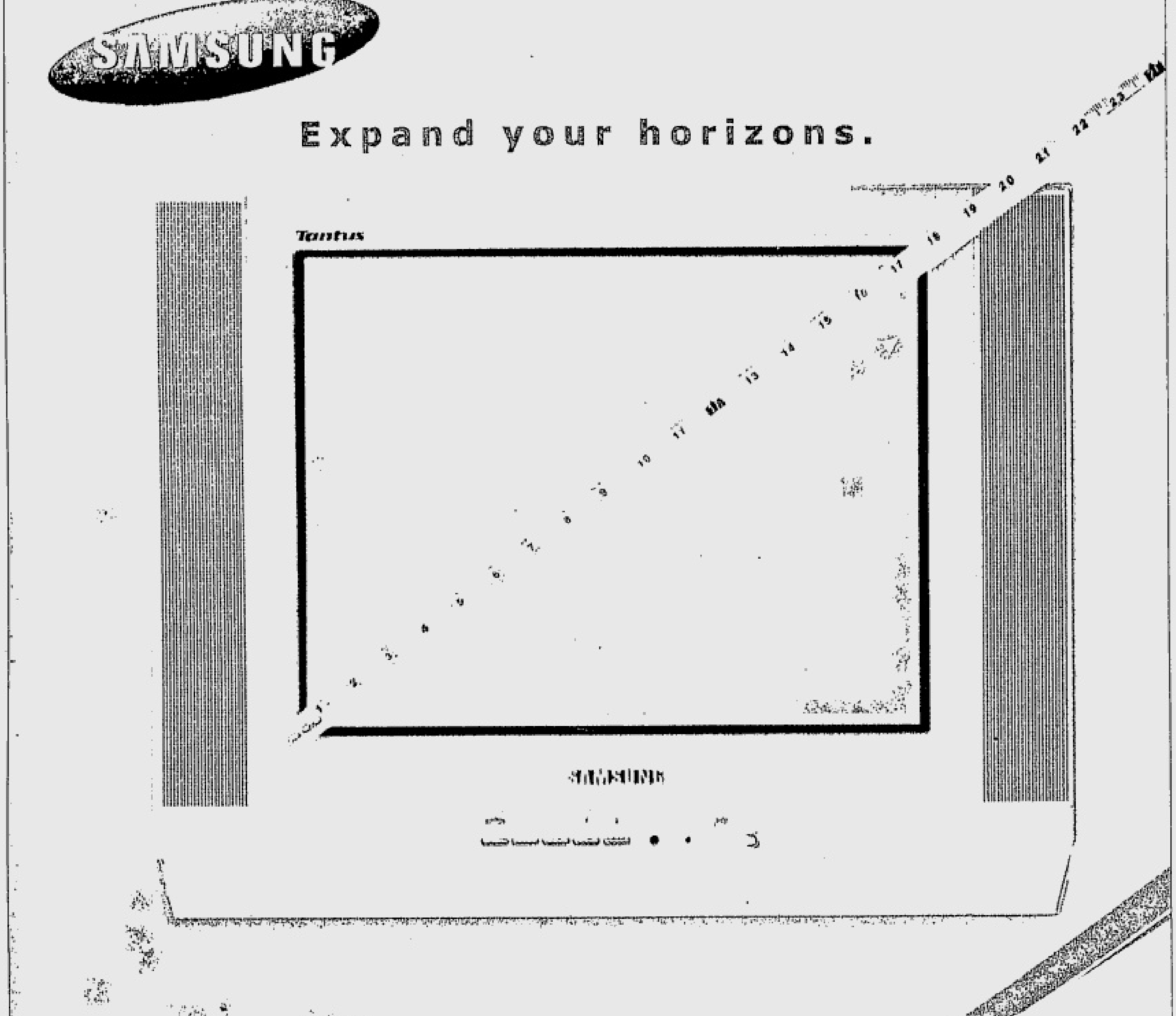
Victor Macalincag, a former finance undersecretary during the Marcos regime, described Poe as someone "who has depth of mind, knows how to analyze problems and knows his priorities."

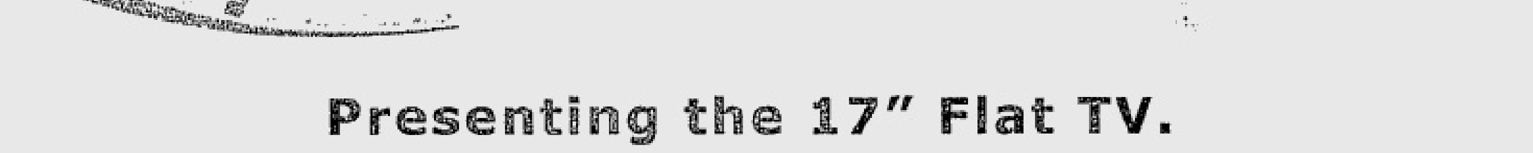
Discerning

"He is also a very discerning person who knows how to immediately separate the good suggestions from the not-so-good ones," Macalincag said.

Escudero said that "the blueprint for economic development will be guided by fundamental market principles and shall be founded on Mr. Poe's commitment to alleviate poverty, provide basic services efficiently and effectively, create more jobs and ensure equal opportunities to all Filipinos."

In his proclamation rally on Feb. 10, however, the 64-year-old Poe distilled the main problems of the impoverished country into three words: "Breakfast, lunch, dinner." *Reports from AFP and Doris C. Dumlao*

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French Navy . . .

From page A1

Philippine government, but he declined to disclose further details.

French investigators have issued an international warrant to allow them to take their probe to foreign ports to hunt down those responsible, who risk five years in prison if found guilty of manslaughter by neglecting safety measures, failure to help persons in danger and fleeing the scene of an accident.

"The situation is being closely followed by the Navy. Certain means may be deployed as soon as the legal conditions—notably agreement from the country of registration of the ship concerned—are met," French defense ministry spokesperson Jean-Francois Bureau told journalists.

France has been tracking several ships, including the Seattle Trader, since Jan. 15 when a French trawler operating in waters off southern England sank with all crew on board after being struck by a vessel that left the scene without alerting authorities.

An underwater examination of the trawler, the Bugaled Breizh, suggested it had been struck by a large and powerful ship, probably a freighter.

Global manhunt

"Since the killings of the sailors on the Bugaled Breizh, we have conducted a real global manhunt," said Dominique Bussereau, a junior transport minister.

Bussereau added that the Seattle Trader, a 39,000-ton cargo vessel built in 2000, had been "tracked extremely closely" and that France had reached the end of the search.

Later Wednesday, however, he acknowledged that the Seattle Trader "may not be the right one."

"We have information, we do not have certainties, we must get on board, we must see," and "then we will perhaps have a sure thing," Bussereau told the French cable news channel LCI.

Not involved

The owner of the Seattle Trader, the Manila-based company Victoria Ship Management, denied that its ship had been involved in the collision.

Romulo Victoriano, the boss of Victoria Ship Management, said Canada's Coast Guard had inspected the freighter after the January collision—at the behest of French authorities—and "worked out that the Seattle Trader was more than 16 km away from the trawler when it went down."

"As a result, the crew can't be blamed," Victoriano told France 3 television by telephone on Wednesday.

Pierre Lanouette, a spokesperson for Canada's Coast Guard, later added that when Canadian maritime authorities inspected the Seattle Trader on Jan. 24-25, "there was nothing that would make you think the boat had had a collision with another vessel."

No order from RP

"There was no trace of paint . . . nor impact on the hull of the Seattle Trader," Lanouette said.

Under a 1982 UN convention governing shipping in international waters, no vessel can be stopped or held unless the "flag state"—the country where it is registered—so orders.

A French official close to the investigation said efforts were under way to persuade Philippine authorities to make such an order.

The defense ministry said one of France's options, if it got the green light from Manila, was to scramble a Navy patrol aircraft stationed in Djibouti at the southern exit of the Red Sea.

A ministry spokesperson said the Seattle Trader had been spotted in the area.

Overflight

If the Philippines declined to allow the freighter to be stopped, "we could possibly make an overflight to take photos of the ship, but nothing more," the spokesperson said.

Francis Vallat, a French representative at the European Maritime Safety Agency, told France Inter radio that he believed the Philippines would accede to the French request "taking into account the potentially heavy charges being brought."

A port official in Djibouti, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Wednesday that the Seattle Trader was due in the country's waters in "three to four days," but added there had been no request made to Djibouti officials to reroute the vessel. *AFP*

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From page A1

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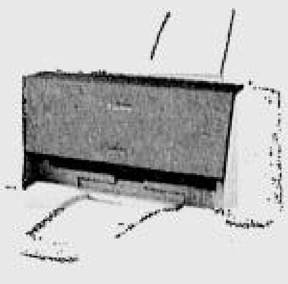

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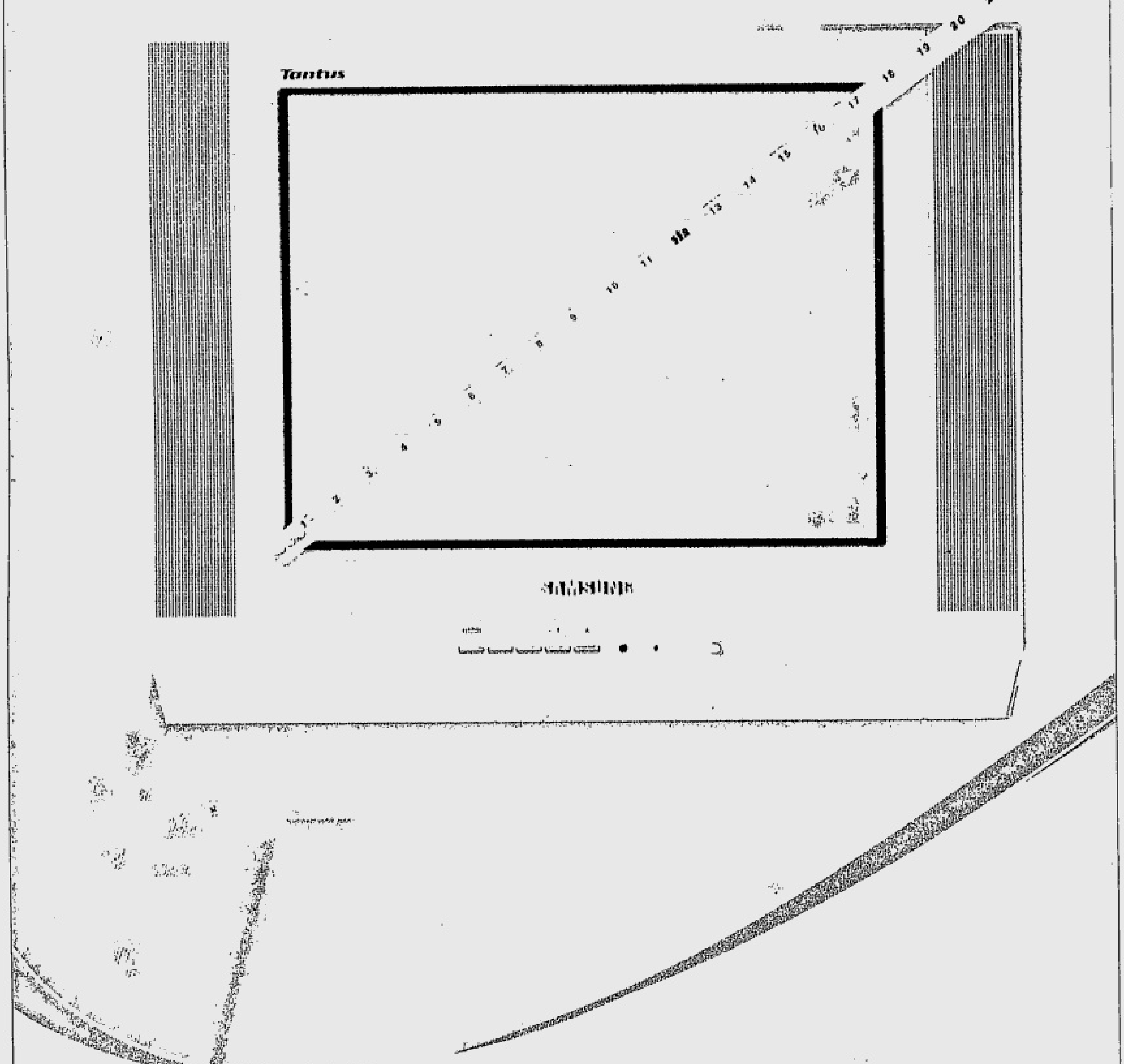

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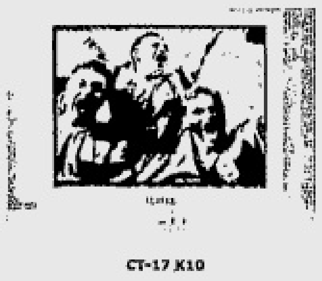

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SC votes 8-6 for retrial of 2 in kidnap case

From page A1

report to this court with deliberate dispatch."

Despite her lifting of the moratorium on capital punishment for convicted kidnappers and drug traffickers, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would not appeal the decision.

"We respect the decision of the Supreme Court remanding the case of two death convicts to the lower court. We have always recognized the authority of the Supreme Court as the final arbiter when it comes to matters of law," she said in a statement.

She added pointedly: "Every Filipino should give this institution due respect."

Teary-eyed

At the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, chaplain Roberto Olaguer said the two convicts became teary-eyed when told the news. He also said he was told that Lara's mother Benilda dropped to her knees in relief and joy.

PAO chief Persida Rueda-Acosta said she was happy with the news and she and her team had much work to do.

Licayan and Lara were convicted on Sept. 9, 1999, of kidnapping businessman Joseph Tomas Co and his assistant Linda Manaysay on Aug. 10, 1998.

The Supreme Court affirmed their conviction and death sentence on Aug. 15, 2001, and in their subsequent appeal. But last month, it ordered a stay of their execution scheduled for Jan. 30 while it studied the new evidence.

No involvement

The PAO had said that two of the co-accused in the case—Pedro Mabansag and Noel de los Reyes—were arrested in January and subsequently submitted affidavits saying Lara and Licayan were not involved in the kidnapping.

"Both affidavits tend to establish that Lara had no involvement in the kidnapping, while that of De los Reyes tends to absolve Licayan with a statement that the latter just happened to pass by the place where the victims were detained," the Supreme Court said.

"It appears that if introduced and admitted, the affidavits might lead to a change in the outcome of the case, sparing the [convicts] from the severest and most permanent of penalties," it said.

Reopen case

The tribunal said that although a retrial was generally not allowed once a conviction became final after an appeal, it had suspended such rules in the past to avoid a miscarriage of justice.

In this case, it was "imperative in the interest of substantial justice" for the case to be reopened, it said.

The high court also noted that the Office of the Solicitor General supported the reopening of the case.

"That the People's Tribune itself seeks the reopening of the case must be given due regard and cannot be dismissed lightly. The State is no less interested than the individual accused of a crime in his acquittal if he is innocent," the high court said.

Apprehensions

But the NBP's Father Olaguer said Lara and Licayan were nursing apprehensions despite the good news.

"They are afraid of being transferred to the Marikina jail. They said some people there may want to harm them," the chaplain said.

He also said the two men feared being tried by the same judge who convicted and sentenced them.

Hot issue

The issue of capital punishment has divided the country and is expected to be hotly debated during the election campaign.

Ms Macapagal, who is seeking a full six-year term, lifted last December a three-year moratorium on executions for convicted kidnappers and drug lords, drawing protests from the European Union and the influential Catholic Church.

Anti-crime groups fear that not executing death convicts would embolden criminals.

Not a deterrent

But opponents of the death penalty cite widespread crime and contend that capital punishment has not deterred wrongdoers. They say prevalent corruption among police and court officials could result in the wrongful execution of innocent people who cannot afford good lawyers.

Capital punishment was abolished in the Philippines in 1987, but reinstated in 1994 for "heinous" crimes such as rape, kidnapping, murder and drug trafficking.

Opposition from human rights groups delayed executions until 1999. Since then, seven people had been put to death, mostly for rape and murder.

The last execution took place in January 2000. *With reports from Joyce Abano, Gil Cabacungan Jr., AP*

EDWIN BACASMAS

A HAPPY day for the Roderick Licayan family—wife Nenita and two children—at the New Bilibid Prisons after the Supreme Court remanded the death convict's case to a lower court for retrial.

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The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is now accepting applications from qualified incoming college students for the GSIS College Scholarship Program for SY 2004-2005.

To qualify under the program, applicants must be legitimate children of active GSIS members and must have a general academic average of 85% or its equivalent.

The following documents, together with the accomplished GSIS Scholarship Program forms, should be submitted to the GSIS Main Office or to the nearest GSIS Branch or District Offices:

- 2 pcs. of passport size picture with signature at the back
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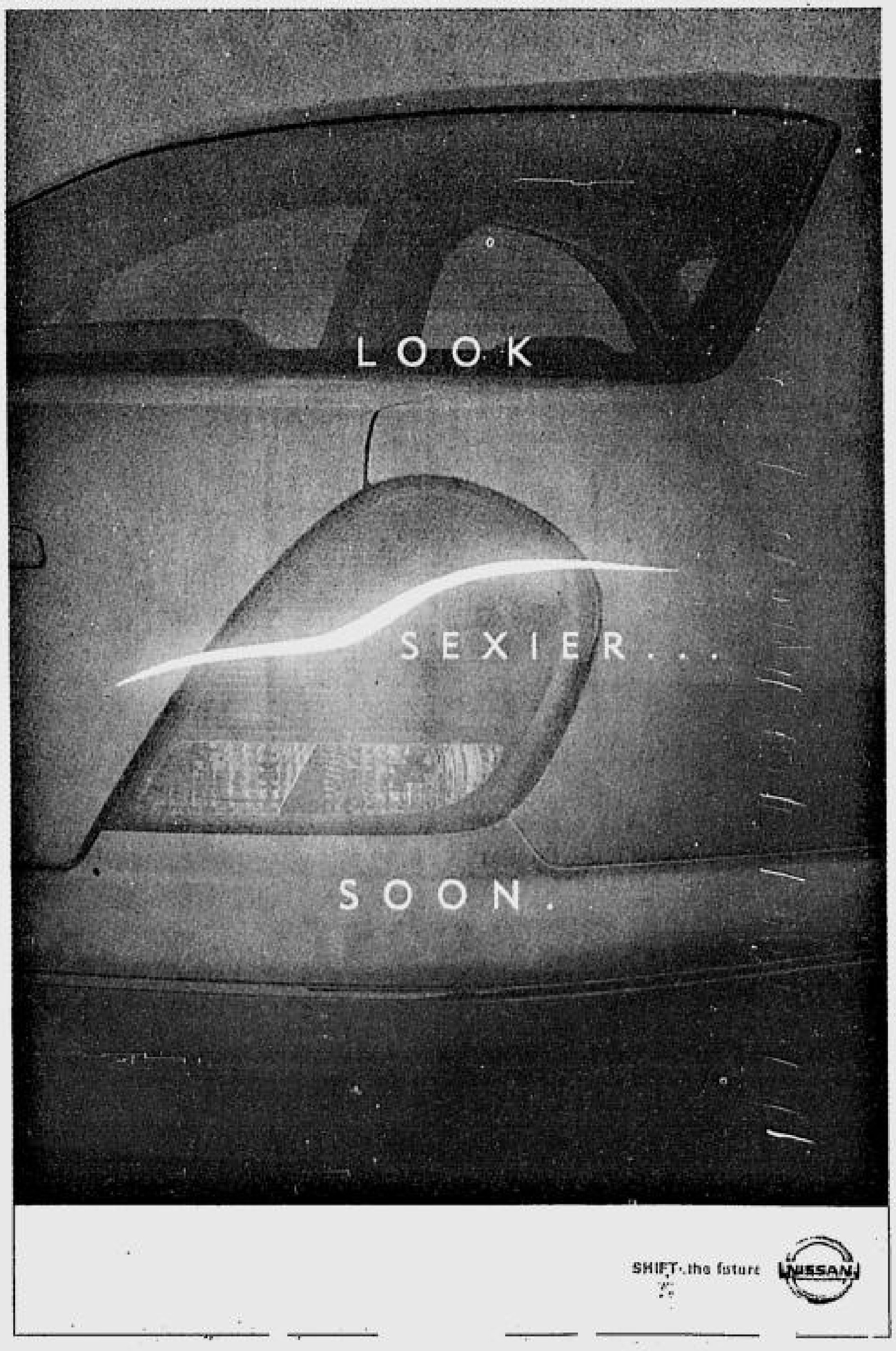

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FPJ backer's son-in-law hospitalized after abduction

By Christine Avendaño

THE SON-IN-LAW of a supporter of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. was held for several hours on Wednesday by armed men who forced him to swallow a poster of Poe and drink brake fluid before releasing him in a bus terminal in Lucena City.

Richard Rivera, son-in-law of restaurant owner Carmelo Santiago as well as a nephew-in-law of Poe's media bureau chief Rod Reyes, is now confined at the Makati Medical Center, with a burnt throat.

Reyes said the "passageway of Rivera's stomach" was also damaged.

The Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino promptly condemned what it described as a "reprehensible and cowardly act."

"This is no simple case of political harassment but a desperate and malevolent act of terrorism by shadowy groups out to wreck the snowballing campaign of the FPJ-led united opposition ticket," the KNP said in a statement.

"This is no simple case of political harassment but a desperate and malevolent act of terrorism by shadowy groups out to wreck the snowballing campaign of the FPJ-led united opposition ticket," the KNP said in a statement.

Reyes said Rivera had been running political errands for Santiago, a well-known supporter of Poe.

It was learned that Rivera, 35, was driving at around noon on Wednesday near the South Superhighway when he was seized.

Rivera was asked by the armed men to withdraw money from his ATM account. He complied and handed P20,000 over to his captors.

Before they let him go, however, the armed men forced Rivera to swallow a campaign poster of Poe and running mate Sen. Loren Legarda which they found in Rivera's vehicle.

They also made Rivera drink brake fluid.

Reyes said his nephew-in-law was allowed to call up his family but no ransom was asked.

The men drove around Lipa City, and Tagaytay before releasing Rivera at a bus terminal in Lucena toward midnight.

By this time, Rivera was already throwing up, said Reyes.

But he was still able to use his cellular phone to call his family. His captors did not take his phone, his car or other valuables.

It's 70 or bust

By Dona Pazzibugan

IT'S final. The passing grade is 70.

The Department of Education rejected appeals by public school teachers to lower the passing grade to 50 supposedly to help pupils cope with the new grading system.

"That is not necessary," said Secretary Edilberto de Jesus, who is supposed to dialog with teachers' groups today.

De Jesus said they have to be strict in their grading system to be able to measure correctly a pupil's learning.

"The grade is not that important; knowledge is. If a student learns only a little yet we use a system to increase his grade, then we're just fooling ourselves," De Jesus said.

The Manila Public School Teachers Association (MPSTA) and the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) found the 70 passing mark "too high" and "not realistic" since the DepEd also imposed a stringent grading system.

"Changes should be gradual and based on the realities on the ground," said MPSTA president Benjie Valbuena, adding that the DepEd still cannot provide public school pupils with adequate learning facilities.

De Jesus said the new grading system only affects the grading of exams for the third and fourth grading period.

Exams compromise only a portion of the final grade.

"Even assuming that the (exam) marks are low, there are other elements that are used in the computation of the grading period," he said.

Last October the DepEd put in place changes in the grading system, and set the passing grade at 75.

But a couple of weeks ago it lowered the passing mark to 70 after many public school pupils flunked during the third grading period.

"The overwhelming majority of students will still fail and the system will not be able to accommodate them," said ACT chair Antonio Tinio.

The DepEd last year did away with the teachers' "transmutation table" that allowed students with very low test scores to pass.

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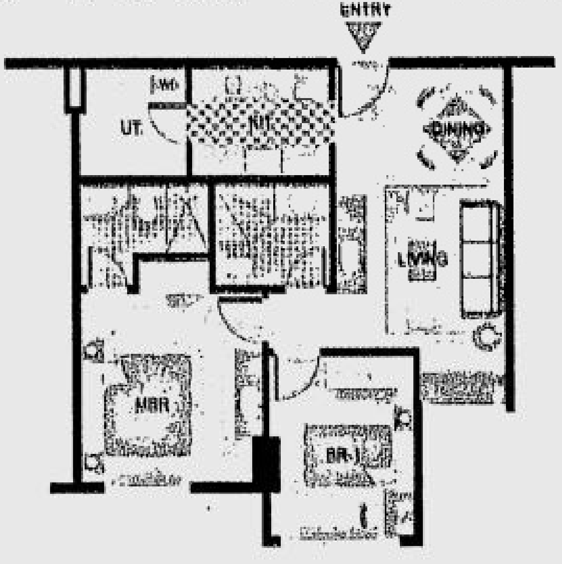

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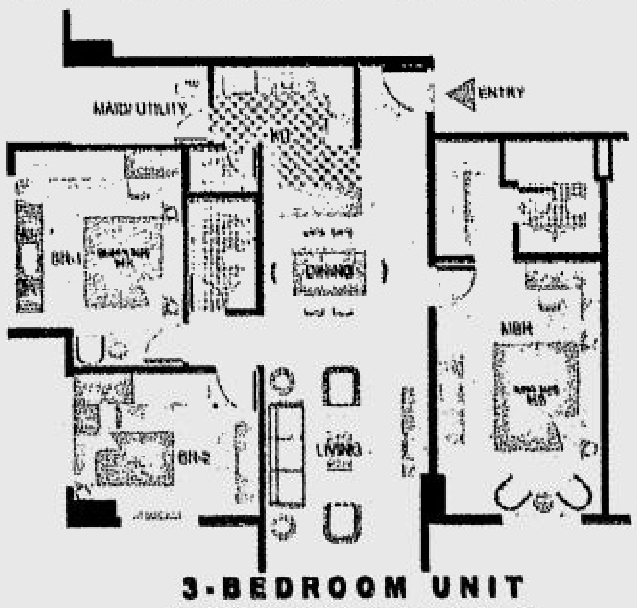

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Caloocan residents pay court to 'Da King'

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

CARRYING her two children, Rosita fought her way through the wild crowd just to get near the stage. She was excited to see in person, for the first time, her movie idol, to whom she is ready to entrust her future and that of her children.

Asked why Fernando Poe Jr., Rosita, 49, had this straightforward answer: "*Subukan natin ... malay mo, yung kabaitan niya sa mga pelikula niya magkatotoo sa tunay na buhay* (Let us try ... perhaps his kindness in his movies will also be true in real life)."

So when she heard about the campaign sortie of Poe's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino on C3 Road in Caloocan City the other night, Rosita took her 10-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter to the street party, forgetting dinner altogether.

Sex bomb dancers

The northbound lane of C3 Road, from A. Mabini Street, was closed to traffic as early as Wednesday noon, leaving only the southbound lane open for northbound and southbound motorists.

Residents of nearby barangays on Wednesday trooped to C3 Road as early as 5 p.m. for the KNP campaign rally scheduled at 6 p.m.

Early in the day, organizers distributed leaflets inviting residents to the sortie by listing the show biz personalities—like Tito, Vic and Joey, the Sexbomb dancers and Eddie Garcia—who would attend the rally.

But for Rosita and her neighbors, the biggest attraction remained the King of Philippine Movies.

Religious

Rosita told the INQUIRER that she religiously watched Poe's movies when she was younger, when moviehouse tickets cost only P30.

When she could not afford to buy tickets, she rented VHS tapes.

Lately, she bought a VCD player and started buying pirated VCDs of Poe's films. But a month ago, she was forced to pawn her player because her family needed money.

The other night, Rosita and her kids elbowed their way into the thick crowd just to get near the stage. But she and her kids were pushed to the edge of the road. She had no choice but to get away from the crowd and listen to the loud speakers.

But many wanted to do more than just listen to speeches. Men, even kids as young as 10 years old, climbed up the trees near the stage and up on the roofs near the road to get a better look of the candidates and performers on stage.

The swarm of fans occupied the road's two lanes, causing heavy traffic. By 8 p.m. Wednesday, the INQUIRER saw more than 15 10-wheeled cargo vans lined up on C3 Road.

Men and boys falling off

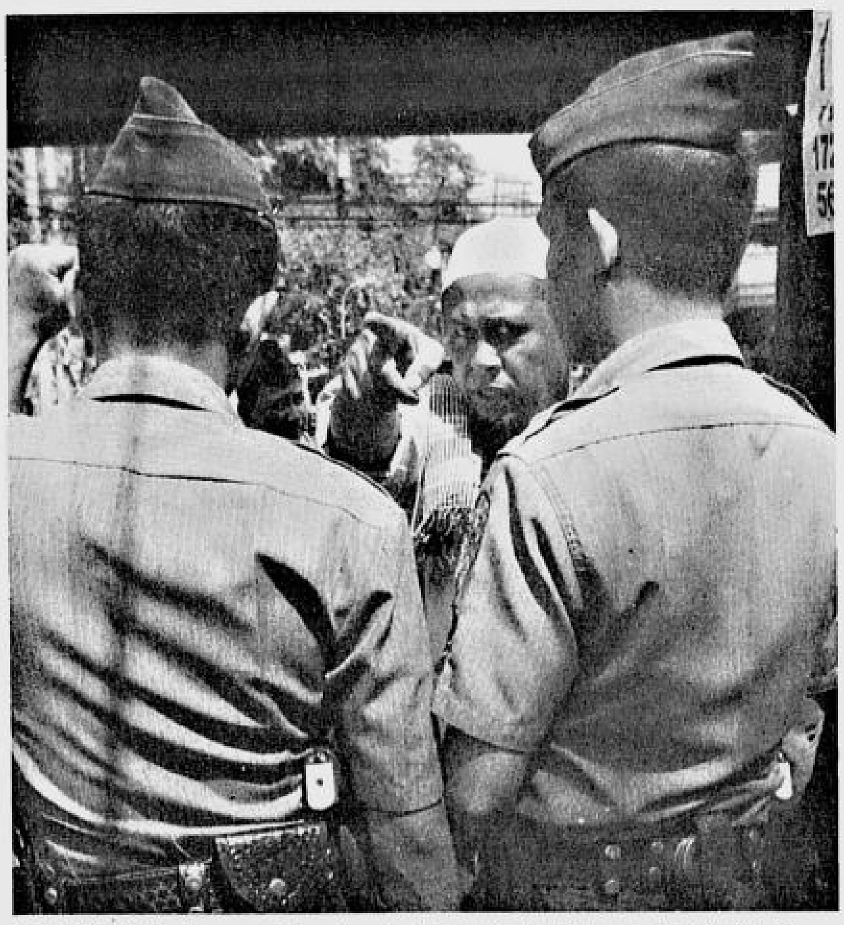
They could not pass through because, aside from the fans who had occupied the road, vehicles going to Navotas were also creeping in across the thick crowd.

Some men were seen jumping on top of the passing trucks and vans just to be able to see the stage. For a few minutes, as the trucks slowly moved across the crowd, the men stayed on top.

Furious after enduring nearly an hour of being trapped in traffic, some of the drivers would suddenly hit the accelerator after passing through the crowd, causing some men and boys to fall off from the trucks.

Jun Zamora, 45, a barangay watchman deployed to the rally, said that in 1998, deposed President Joseph Estrada also held a rally in the same spot on C3 Road. The difference: There were more people in Poe's rally on Wednesday.

But Rosita was happy. While some were cursing because of traffic and some were yelling after seeing some celebrities, Rosita patiently waited for her idol. Later that night, she was ready to go home, where pictures and posters of Poe, pasted on the walls of the kitchen—and even the toilet—were waiting for her.



POLICEMEN block a man trying to make his way to the Supreme Court gate on Padre Faura street where he hopes to cast his support for his beleaguered idol, Fernando Poe Jr.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Battling tricycle, jeepney drivers hold peace talks

THINGS are back to normal, at least for a while.

As right-of-way negotiations are being sorted out, tricycle drivers in Caloocan City yesterday allowed Malabon-Recto jeepney drivers to pass through 2nd Avenue on one condition: The jeepney drivers will not pick up passengers within the tricycle drivers' routes.

During a meeting yesterday at the city's public safety and traffic management department, the leaders of the jeepney drivers agreed to the condition, temporarily ending the deadlock.

On Wednesday, hundreds of passengers were stranded when jeepney drivers plying the Malabon (or Navotas) to Recto routes stopped operations after the tricycle drivers blocked the jeepneys on 2nd Avenue.

Members of the Second Avenue Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association complained that they had been losing passengers—and earnings—to the jeepney drivers.

When the jeepney drivers went to 4th Avenue, the tricycle drivers there also blocked them. They could not pass through 5th Avenue because the tricycle drivers there had previously barred them passage.

Pasang-Masda president Obet Martin told the INQUIRER yesterday that his members agreed not to pick up passengers from De Aquino Street to 2nd Avenue, in accordance with the condition set by the tricycle drivers.

In return, SATODA leaders agreed to discourage their members from harassing jeepney drivers passing through.

DPSTM chief Augusto Belen also told the INQUIRER yesterday that the tricycle drivers could get the plate number of any jeepney seen violating the agreement, and report the violation to the DPSTM or even to Martin.

Both parties will again meet today at 4 p.m. to resolve the problem.

Malabon (Navotas)-Recto jeeps used to pass through Monumento Circle, using Samson Road.

But when the local government tried to ease traffic in Monumento Circle, the jeeps were rerouted to C3 and 5th Avenue.

In March 2003, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board extended the implementation of the route modification. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

51 gun ban violators held

FIFTY-ONE persons have been arrested in the Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) area for violating the elections gun ban.

Figures from the Northern Police District showed that 14 persons were arrested in the Comelec chokepoints set up in key areas in Camanava, while 37 persons were found carrying knives or guns without Comelec permits.

Of those arrested, five were found carrying .45 caliber pistols while 20 were carrying either .38 caliber or 9 mm handguns. Thirteen were found carrying improvised shotguns or pen guns and 13 were arrested for carrying knives.

The ban on deadly weapons took effect 147 days before the election day and will stay until June 9. Aside from guns, the ban also prohibits other deadly weapons like knives and ice-picks.

NPD Director Marcelino Franco told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview that the Comelec ban had been integrated with the existing chokepoints and checkpoints in the Camanava area.

There are also policemen on mobile patrol who specifically implement the ban.

Franco also appealed to supporters of politicians to "be disciplined" and avoid violence. *Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.*

A year on, Llamas slay suspect still at large

By Leila Salaverria

ABDULRAHMAN

THE P750,000 reward for the suspected killer of law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas is still up for grabs, and the National Bureau of Investigation is appealing to the public for information that could lead to the suspect's arrest.

Basher Macaindig Abdulrahman is still at large, more than a year after allegedly shooting Llamas to death during a traffic altercation in Pasay City in January last year. Abdulrahman also goes by the aliases Basher Macaindig Sultan or Basher Macaindig Alonto.

NBI agents said Abdulrahman was last spotted in Masiu, Lanao del Sur, where he has relatives. The agents said the suspect is staying in the province, where some parties offer him protection. But Abdulrahman is also moving from location to location to avoid capture, the agents added.

The NBI also conducted raids in Masiu last year, but the suspect was able to give them the slip. Agents also fear that Abdulrahman has joined the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The NBI has released telephone numbers where concerned citizens could call if they have information that could lead to Abdulrahman's arrest. The direct line is 524-3283, and the trunkline is 523-8231 local 3619 and 3460.

Other persons they could call are Atty. Edmund Arugay (0917-9640760), Atty. Glenn Peralta (0918-9422612) and Atty. Peter Lugay (0920-595-2300).

METROBRIEFS

Fatimah's feat

A HOUSEWIFE jumped off a moving vehicle which was being held up by two armed men on Wednesday in Pasig City. Fatimah Abrinka, 58, didn't think about what could happen to her. She only wanted to get out of the FX taxi and alert authorities about the holdup there. When the robbers saw what Fatimah did, they apparently got scared, got out of the FX taxi and fled towards Marikina City on board two motorcycles which had been trailing the vehicle along Marcos Highway. Fortunately for Fatimah, a mobile patrol passed by, saw her lying on the road and immediately raised a radio alarm. After a 15-minute chase, the Marikina police nabbed John Astrohpel Ortiz, one of the suspects, at the city's main public market. He yielded a black bag containing P7,000 in cash and which belonged to one of the passengers. Behind bars, Ortiz admitted he was part of the robbery group but insisted he only drove for his colleagues. As for Fatimah, this is what she has to say: "All I was thinking was that someone should know what was happening inside the FX. Most of the passengers were women, and they might bring us somewhere and harm us." *Luige del Puerto*

Shabu sneaker held

AUTHORITIES have arrested a 33-year-old woman after she was caught trying to sneak shabu into the municipal jail in Teresa, Rizal. The police said Josephine Velasco of Barangay Muzon, Taytay, Rizal, yielded the banned drug while being searched. Velasco was visiting a live-in partner inside the Teresa jail, according to JO1 Joel Ampo. It is a standard operating procedure for visitors to show jail guards everything they are bringing, including food, to their relatives or friends doing time inside. She is facing charges of violating anti-illegal drugs laws. *Luige del Puerto*

TOYM Week

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has declared Feb. 23-29 as National TOYM Week. TOYM means Ten Outstanding Young Men. A week-long series of activities with the theme, "Upholding Excellence" which is also the official slogan of the TOYM Foundation, has been lined up, according to Butch Jimenez, TOYM Awardee and president of the TOYM Foundation. The week opens with an art exhibit on Feb. 23 at the DBP Ugnayan Hall featuring never before seen works of artists Malang, Napoleon Abueva, Abdul and Sajid Imao, Jose Joya and other awardees. A student forum, titled "Get Ready to Soar," featuring lectures on excellence will be held on Feb. 24 at the Music Museum. This will be conducted by various TOYM awardees such as historian Ambeth Ocampo, entrepreneur Jay Aldeguer of Island Souvenirs and John Lu Koa of French Baker, INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and GMA Films producer and media head of PLDT, Butch Jimenez. A grand reunion of past TOYM winners ends the week-long celebration on Feb. 27.

Minors languish in city jail

By Luige del Puerto

THREE minors accused of raping a 17-year-old deaf-mute girl last week, have been languishing in a Pasig City jail alongside hardened criminals.

The boys, aged 14 to 17, along with suspected robbers, were presented to the media at the Eastern Police District annex office on Meralco Avenue, Barangay Ugong yesterday.

They were handcuffed to each other, their names and age printed on a white cardboard tied around their necks.

Senior Supt. Ernesto Catungal, city police chief, said the minors were ordered to turn their backs on photographers when their pictures were taken.

"Yes, they are minors, that's why *pina-about face natin sila* (we ordered them to face away)," Catungal said.

When asked what was taking the police so long to turn the boys over to the welfare department, Catungal said they are merely waiting for the court order.

Another official said that the city welfare department would not accept the boys unless there is a court order releasing them to its custody.

The official added that there is a "special cell" for minors at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Nagpayong, Barangay Pinagbuhatan.

The boys were presented to the media, along with Michael Lialde and Rey Ribo, both 19, who were also accused of raping the deaf-mute girl.

When interviewed, all five suspects denied the charge.

"We didn't touch her," one of the minors said. "We saw her pass us by that night. I was selling quail eggs."

"Using sign language, she said she saw someone getting stabbed," the boy added. "But she left after that."

The minors said they could not believe it when the police arrested them and charged them with rape.

40 hurt in Magallanes bus crash

By Margaux Ortiz

AT LEAST 40 passengers were injured when a passenger bus lost its brakes and slammed into a Metro Rail Transit post in Makati City yesterday.

According to PO3 Mardy Domingo of the Southern Police District Traffic Office, the Lipa Transit bus was traveling on the northbound lane of Edsa when it lost its brakes near Mantrade at 12:25 p.m.

Domingo said the still unidentified driver of the bus might have opted to slam the bus into an MRT post to avoid colliding with other vehicles.

On impact, the bus was crushed to half its original length, severely injuring the passengers trapped inside, the policeman added.

Domingo said 28 of the victims were taken to the Makati Medical Center, while 12 were taken to the Ospital ng Makati.

According to Osmak emergency room clerk Beng Sy, victim Romeo Tan, 48, incurred the worst injuries. Hospital officials said that Tan's leg may be amputated.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority immediately sent six ambulances to transport the victims to the hospital.

BuCor chief hits Lumanog lawyer

From page A24

"*Yung sinabi ni Santos na nag-deteriorate ang health ni Lumanog* (What Santos said about how Lumanog's health has deteriorated) ... that is a lie," Santiago said. "The doctors at the NBP hospital are taking care of him and seeing to (Lumanog's) welfare 24 hours a day."

Luzviminda Villanueva, head of the NBP hospital, stood by Santiago and confirmed that the ailing prisoner is being "monitored 24 hours a day by the doctors and nurses here at the hospital, as was suggested by the NKTI."

Yesterday, Villanueva checked on Lumanog and saw that "he's doing just fine."

"Lumanog is placed in an isolation room to prevent him from getting any infection," Villanueva said. "That isolation room was made solely for him and it is cleaned daily."

According to Villanueva, Lumanog's room has an electric fan and an exhaust fan.

"There are no air-conditioned rooms here at the NBP hospital," she stressed.

"Lumanog is alive," Santiago said. "He's well taken care of by the doctors at the hospital, but we just don't have the funding to give him a five-star accommodation here at Bilibid."

In April 2003, Lumanog underwent a kidney transplant at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute. He had been confined there until he was transferred to the NBP hospital last week.

Prison officials under BuCor chief legal officer Roberto Sanggalang, escorted Lumanog back to the NBP after NKTI director Enrique Ona announced that Lumanog was fit for discharge.

Sanggalang said that the high court did not mention that a court order had to be presented for Lumanog's transfer.

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PUV strikes, poll rallies, Edsa 1 top police agenda

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THE POLICE appear to have their hands full, with threats of crippling transport strikes and the conduct of violent political rallies presently sweeping the streets.

Also on Feb. 22 up to Feb. 25, members of the National Capital Region Police Office have to contend with a mass action that could dwarf all other mass actions—the celebration of the 1986 Edsa People Power revolt.

National Capital Region Police Office spokesperson Bart Bustamante told the INQUIRER that they are ready should Poe's supporters conduct a mass action similar to the violent protest staged yesterday.

During the rally in Manila yesterday, thousands of Fernando Poe Jr.'s supporters engaged lawmen in a violent face-off when they insisted on walking up to the Supreme Court Building on Taft Avenue.

Bustamante said the protest action in Manila was safely defused.

"We are not discounting the possibility that Poe's other sympathizers will do the same ... But we are still prepared," Bustamante said.

On the transport strikes, NCRPO Director Ricardo De Leon told the INQUIRER that they had worked out contingency measures.

On Tuesday, leaders of transport groups threatened to launch a nationwide strike a few weeks from now should the government again junk their demand for a fare increase.

The NCRPO has since issued a memorandum instructing the five police districts to "identify critical roads and vital installations which shall be protected and kept operational at all times."

Policemen have also been directed to prevent transport leaders from intimidating or harassing drivers who would not support the strike.

CHAIN GANG
Two men in handcuffs try to support a third man who has been wounded in an encounter with lawmen Wednesday night. JOAN BONDOC

BuCor chief hits Lumanog lawyer

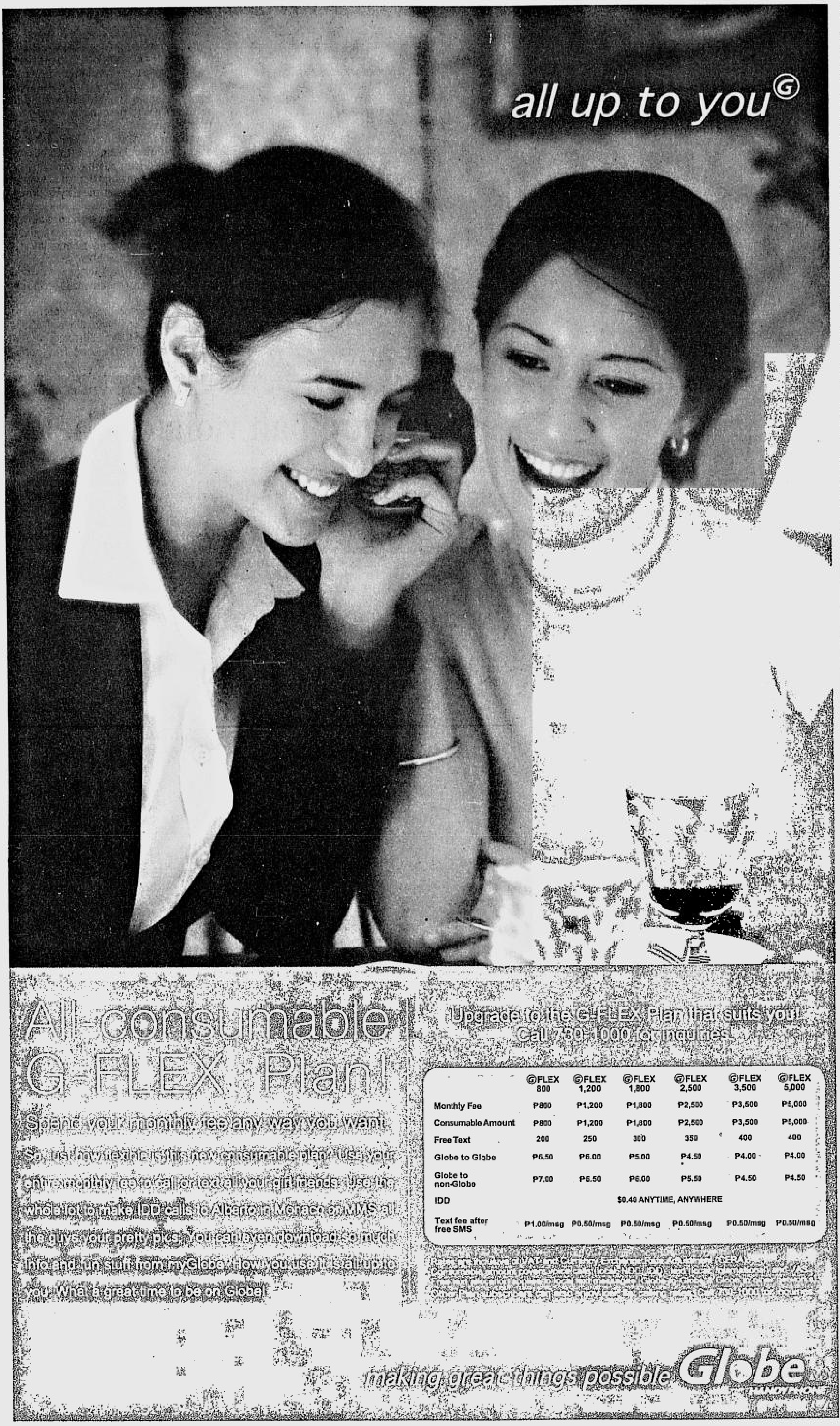
By Joyce Abaño

BUREAU of Corrections chief Dionisio Santiago on Wednesday lashed out at lawyer Soliman Santos Jr. for petitioning the Supreme Court to cite the BuCor official for contempt for transferring death convict Lenido Lumanog to the New Bilibid Prisons hospital without a court order.

"*Ang sinabi lang ng Supreme Court ay ipagamot si Lumanog, so hindi illegal yung pagkuha namin sa kanya* (What the Supreme Court ordered was for Lumanog to be treated, so we did nothing illegal when we took the prisoner back to custody)," Santiago said. "Besides, the director at the NKTI already said he's fit for discharge."

Santiago also reacted strongly to Santos' claim that the death convict's health has suffered as a result of the transfer.

BUCOR/ A23



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BASKETBALL: NBA Hardwood Classics - Bulls vs Jazz, Game 6, 1998 Finals; 8:30 a.m.; Solar Sports - With Chicago down by three points in the game's closing moments, two clutch jumpers and a slick steal by Michael Jordan give the Bulls the lead, the victory, and their sixth NBA title in eight years.

NBA - Kings vs Timberwolves; 8 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Star Sports; Sixers vs Sonics; 11 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports - Western heavyweights Sacramento and Minnesota collide while newly appointed interim head coach Chris Ford hopes to steer struggling Philadelphia to a victory over Seattle.

BILLIARDS: US 9 Ball Open; 2 p.m.; Solar Sports - Jose "Amang" Parica takes on Ralf Souquet.

Bitter basketball row far from over

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee is only maintaining the status quo in its recognition of the Basketball Association of the Philippines as the national body for the sport.

This was clarified yesterday by POC president Celso Dayrit, who stressed that the legal commission of the local Olympic body has yet to come up with the final decision on the request for recognition of the Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi).

Dayrit said he also plans to seek the guidance of the International Olympic Committee in resolving the BAP-Bapi controversy.

"Our position is clear. We are recognizing BAP for now until the issue is resolved," Dayrit said. "Some of my statements were misconstrued. And what I said yesterday (Wednesday) was the same statement I made several weeks back."

Explaining further, Dayrit said that while the POC recognizes the BAP based on the provisions of the Olympic charter and the POC constitution, "we also respect the courts' authority to rule on the SEC registration of Bapi."

"We must remember that the Philippine courts and the SEC have both respected the POC in its sole authority in the Philippines to recognize and accredit national sports associations (NSAs)," he added.

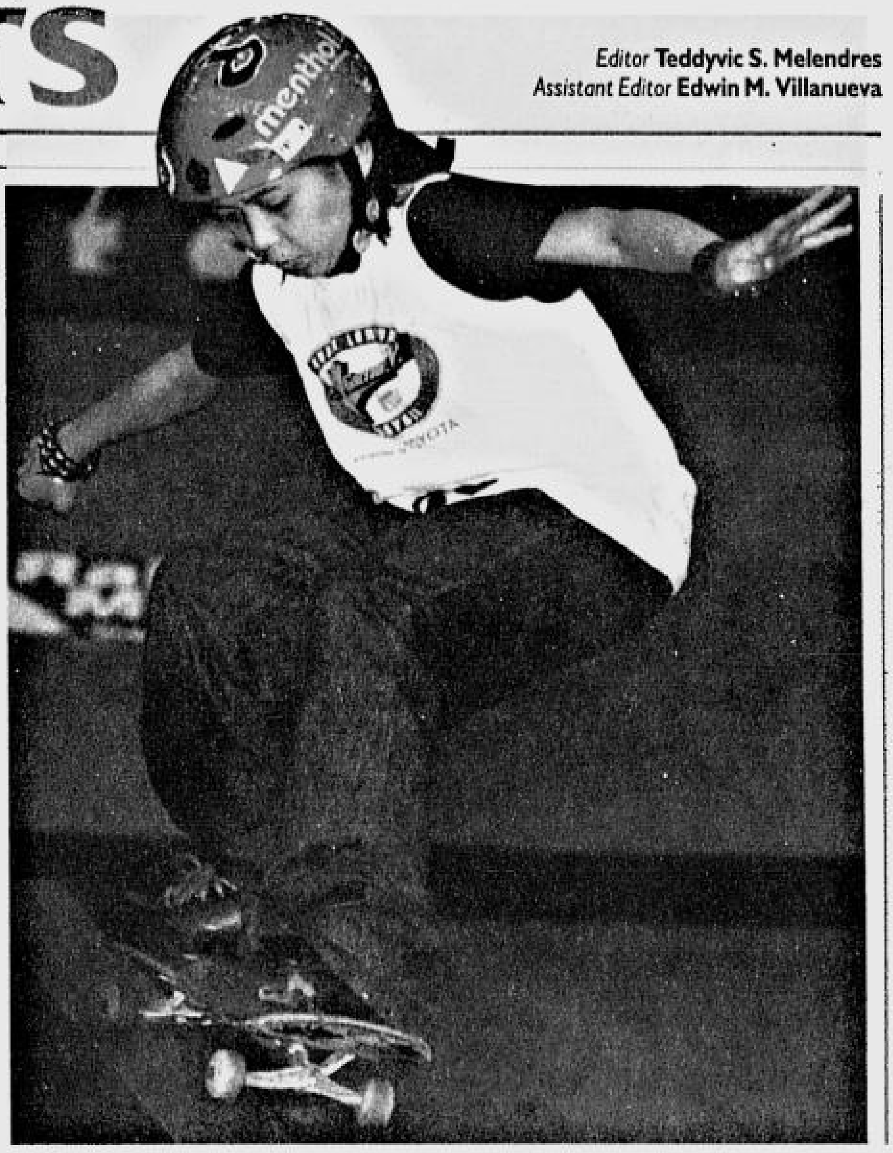
The BAP became known as the Bapi when then secretary general Nic Jorge registered it with the SEC in 1994 to follow the requirements set by the General Appropriations act of the same year.

But another group led by now BAP secretary general Graham Lim challenged the legitimacy of the Bapi in the courts and the BAP had already elected Tiny Literal president when the Bapi was finally declared the rightful NSA for basketball by the Court of Appeals.

"We sympathize with Mr. Dayrit for all the troubles this issue is causing him and the POC," Jorge said. "But we are fighting for what is right. The Filipino people have been deprived of justice for more than eight years now, and we will continue our claim to the basketball leadership because even the honorable judges of the courts have found the Bapi as the rightful and le-

BITTER/A26

JORGE: Set to elevate claim to the ABC



GOOD FOR GOLD: Anjou Jelicoe Mauricio of the Philippines in action during the best trick final in skateboarding in the Asian Junior X-Games at the Bukit Jalil Indoor Stadium Wednesday in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Mauricio triumphed. *See story on A26.* GETTY IMAGES

Bacolod bet widens lead; VGC hangs on

BACOLOD bet Jose Isedeno survived a triple-bogey disaster to shoot a one-under-par 70 yesterday and padded his lead to four strokes even as host Valley kept a slim lead in team play after the penultimate round of the 15th Uratex National Caddies Championship.

Isedeno's birdies on all four par-5s made up for his double-par on the par-3 12th where he hit his tee shot out-of-bounds in what otherwise was another brilliant effort at the Valley executive course.

The 47-year-old Isedeno tallied his second sub-par round in three days with his 209 aggregate, pushing him comfortably ahead of Iloilo's Rene Menor who was in solo second spot at 213.

Apo's Ranil Glimada (69) and Jomar Pepito of Valley (71) were tied at 215.

But while Isedeno seemed ready for a runaway victory, the frontrunning teams braced for a thrilling finish.

Only a mere stroke separated the top three squads as Valley rode Pepito's steady play to stay on top at 650, with Apo second at 651 and Negros third at 652.

Valley aggregated 215, counting the 70 of Estrera Santos and the 74 of Alvin Mijares, to go with its earlier 223 and 212.

Iloilo totalled 657 to stay in contention, followed by Bacolod with 660, defending champion Wack Wack 661, Lumbia 666, Mt. Malindang 671, Davao Golf 687 and Puerto Azul 688.

Kagitingan's Susan Delfino streaked to a five-stroke lead in the ladies division with an 84-162.

Teresa Carpio of Canlubang scored an 81 for 167.

Louie Manday of Peninsula shot the tournament's second hole-in-one on the par-3 176-yard third hole but failed to win the bonanza given to Cebu City's Roderick Borja earlier.

Manday holed a Maxfli ball with a 3-iron but just got the regular P5,000 prize from the club unlike Borja, who aced the 11th to win P100,000 and the P5,000 extra.

No. 11 was the designated hole for the P100,000 hole-in-one prize.

"Except for one disastrous hole, I could have scored a lot better," said Isedeno.

Making putts from as far away as 25 feet twice and chipping from the outside once, Isedeno tamed the par-5s—the fifth, ninth, 13th and 16th. He got his fifth birdie on No. 11.

Awaiting the ladies' division champion is the top prize of P20,000 out of the P2-million event Naty Cheng and her children elected to continue after the death last year of husband Robert, who started the tournament in 1988.

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POC steps into crisis in softball

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LOOKS like the Philippine Olympic Committee is beginning to fix things in its backyard.

A day after sending an arbitration committee to solve the leadership crisis in softball, the POC yesterday told the Basketball Association of the Philippines that the local Olympic body has the responsibility and authority to ensure that "NSAs provide deserving athletes the opportunity to represent and give honors to the country."

POC president Celso Dayrit in effect told the BAP to reconsider its decision to take over the formation and training of future national teams and exclude the country's top bets from the Philippine Basketball Association.

Meanwhile, Asian Softball Association of the Philippines secretary general and executive vice president Boy Codiñera said he is confident the POC will support their campaign to boot out Asaphil president Harry Angping for "loss of confidence."

POC/A26

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Featuring The Oscar's Best Picture nominees.
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Watch the 76th Academy Awards on March 1
SM Megamall Atrium, 10am
SM City Cebu Entertainment Plaza, 10am
The Megastrip, 7pm
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Screening Schedule for February 18

SM Megamall Cinema 7		SM Manila Cinema 7		SM Southmall Cinema 6		SM Cebu Cinema 4	
Master & Commander (PG13)	11:30am	Master & Commander (PG13)	11:25am	Seabiscuit (GP)	[illegible]	Mystic River (R13)	11:30am
Lord of the Rings 3 (PG13)	2:30pm	Mystic River (R13)	2:21pm	Mystic River (R13)	[illegible]	Lord of the Rings 3 (PG13)	2:00pm
Mystic River (R13)	6:30pm	Lord of the Rings 3 (PG13)	5:10pm	Master & Commander (PG13)	5:30pm	Lord of the Rings 3 (PG13)	5:35pm
Master & Commander (PG13)	8:50pm	Master & Commander (PG13)	8:00pm	Seabiscuit (GP)	8:30pm	Master & Commander (PG13)	9:00pm

Watch The 76th Academy Awards on March 1, 9:30 am with replay at 7 pm on RPN 9

Hair Loss?
Don't Resort to Desperate Measures.

"I was advised to try hot oil and scalp massage to stop my hair from thinning out but it didn't work. Only through Svenson's treatments did my hair become healthier with more volume."
- Celeste Garcia
Co-manager

"I tried herbal soaps and shampoos but my falling hair problem became worse. Only with Svenson's help did my hair stop thinning and falling out."
- Roberto Santos
Businessman

If you're desperate to end your hair loss, act now. You have no time to waste. Don't resort to using products that aren't proven to solve your problem. Trust **Svenson International.** Our highly effective treatments will stop the main source of hair loss, hasten the re-growth process and improve your hair's condition with long-lasting and significant results.

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PETRON BLAZE FUELS JASON'S ROCKET.
CATCH JASON MRAZ LIVE IN CONCERT! With songs from the hit album 'Waiting For My Rocket to Come"
February 21, 2004, Saturday, ALIW Theater, Star City, CCP Complex: Tickets available at Ticket World (Tel* 891-9999), or call Eventscape Manila (Tel* 561-0422) for inquiries.
PETRON BLAZE

10 RP Open slots up today

WHAT'S a 16-year-old girl doing in an RP Open qualifier?

That's what 32 male pros will be asking today when they see Remijin Camping tee off with them in today's 18-hole qualifier for next week's DHL-Philippine Open golf championship at Riviera's Couples course.

Chances are, they might also get charmed by the young beauty.

Camping tries to buck the overwhelming odds with her sheer determination as the daughter of a Cuban immigrant tries to squeeze herself into a field that already includes one brave woman—Ria Denise Quiazon (*See separate story*).

When not even an LPGA standout like Jenny Rosales dare take the challenge, Camping wants to emulate Haiwaiian teenage phenom Michelle Wie in the PGA Tour.

Camping calls Riviera her home course. But she has yet to create a ripple in the local jungolf scene, always having to play second fiddle to the more prominent Jayvie Agojo. They both finished fourth in recent RP Ladies Open.

Also competing in the qualifier are nine local players Edgar Ababa, Al Cruz, Randy Garalde, Lito Rempojo, Lito Saban, Rodolfo Ardimer, Orlan Sumcad, Robert Seno and Erwin Arcilla who are hoping to get one of the 10 Open slots to be disputed today.

Korean and Japanese pros make up the rest of the qualifying hopefuls.

Only 20 slots were given by the organizing NGAP to RP pros to go with the six already getting exempt status led by 1998 champion Frankie Miñoza.

Meanwhile, the sponsoring DHL Express will provide free transportation to golfing fans to and from Riviera in the last two days of the tournament. Two shuttle buses will leave the Intercon Hotel in Makati at 8 and 9 a.m. For details, call up NGAP at tel. Nos. 525-6987 or 524-5160.

Jong Arcano

Clark Field battleground for Petron beach volleyball

EXPECT a new pair of champions when the Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball tournament unfolds on Feb. 21-22 at the Clearwater Country Club in Clark Field, Pampanga.

"We are making sure that a new champion will be crowned in the Clearwater leg and so we have decided to defer the participation of the former Petron titlists," said organizer Tisha Abundo.

Abundo, a former commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission, said that former winners of the Petron volleyfest, will gather in a grand finale later this year to determine the year's true beach volleyball queens.

"That will truly be a huge event because it will be a Battle of the Champions-type of competition," said Abundo.

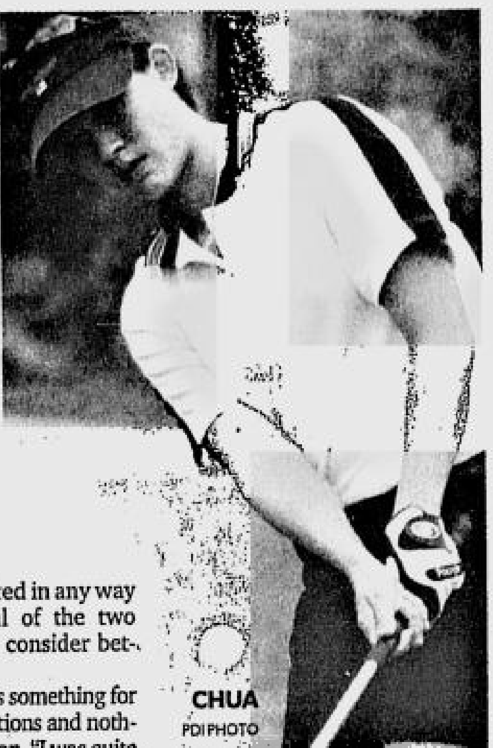
The cast of players is a mix of veterans led by Lou Maranon and Sherrie Anne Garcia, together with movie actress Isabel Granada and her partner, Marysol Teves, plus a sprinkling of newcomers in Merwyl Yalung and Danica Macalino.

Completing the list of participants are the tandems of Joyce Realeza and Ramma Jaro; Jacie Ann Montefrio and Karla San Diego; Rosalina Gomez and Jey Mijares; Sherly Abello and Theresa Lopez; Kathleen Fajardo and Shiela Salaysay; Layna Macapagal and Mylene Manuel, and Mary Gallano and Sharon Ledesma.

The champion receives P10,000 cash and a trophy, while the runner-up will get P5,000.

ALL SET: Quiazon arrives from the US Tuesday. ROGER MARGALLO

Chua out, too, but Quiazon still unfazed



CHUA
PDI PHOTO

By Jong Arcano

TWO out, one to go.

What had been planned to be a high-impact participation for women golfers in next week's DHL-Philippine Open suffered another blow yesterday when Heidi Chua followed the trail of Jenny Rosales by pulling out of next week's $150,000 championship at Riviera's Langer course.

Chua, the back-to-back national ladies champion who turned pro last year, felt that after a careful evaluation, it was "not in the best of her interest" to participate.

She instead offered the slot given her by the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP) to another Filipino.

The daughter of a business tycoon, Chua played a few rounds at the venue last week and seemed to have been given a reality check: She had a 7-over 78 under the most tame conditions the beast of a course had to offer.

Chua's late withdrawal leaves another new pro, Fil-American Ria Denise Quiazon, with the big mission of fighting it out against the men in the event presented by San Miguel Beer, with Mitsubishi Motors as the official car.

ERIK ARAZAS

ROSALES: Busy LPGA schedule

And she's not affected in any way by the withdrawal of the two players who many consider better than she is.

"This Open stint is something for my own noble intentions and nothing else," said Quiazon. "I was quite surprised to hear the news of Heidi's decision, but I would like to let everybody know that I will be at Riviera next week."

She got her first taste of the brutal conditions at the Langer course of Riviera on Wednesday but was not cowed: "I just didn't know where to put my shots because it was my first time. I'll be there for a couple more rounds in the coming days and hopefully, I can adjust quickly given the time limitations."

Quiazon's first brush with the opposite gender on the course came when she was still at the Logan High in Union City, San Francisco. She played in a junior league made up of boys and was good enough to beat all of them.

Quiazon, whose trip here is provided free by the organizers, said that she hopes to make the most of the opportunity given her to join the Open, especially since she's in the process of firming up her priorities for her golf career and get into the level of play she wants for herself.

Even Rosales, who was offered a hefty appearance fee just to play, doubted if she can be competitive enough at the Langer.

"I will be happy if I shoot an 80 on any day. For me it's like shooting an even-par score already," said Rosales, who carried the bag for her brother, Gerald, when he won the all-peso Open in 2001 at the same venue.

Meanwhile, jungolfer Remijin Camping will attempt to pick up where Chua left off as she joins a 33-player field dominated by Koreans in today's 18-hole qualifier.

RP X-Gamer bags skateboard gold

KUALA LUMPUR—The Philippines' Anjou Jellicoe Mauricio stunned the highly partisan gallery with a big rail stunt Wednesday night to seize the gold medal in skateboarding's best trick finals of the Asian Junior X-Games V at the Stadium Putra in Bukit Jalil here.

The 14-year-old Mauricio impressed with his perfect execution of the grind down the big rail to narrowly beat Taiwan's Siao Jyun Mi, who had looked all set to snatch the gold medal, and a couple of Malaysian youngsters.

"This (Mauricio's stunt) was definitely the most difficult trick of the weekend," said competition chief judge Sasha Steinhorst, who is also head judge of skateboarding's World Cup.

Mauricio's victory in the competition presented by Toyota came after 2002 champion Shariman Rusdee Morshidi of Malaysia topped the bicycle event to earn another trip to Woodward Camp, the mecca of X-Games, in the United States.

Australian skateboarder Ben Bodnar, who ruled the regular competition in Mauricio's event, and fellow Aussie, in-line skater Rian Arnold, join Morshidi in Woodward Camp.

Siao came back to capture the Big Air gold medal, the final event of the competitions that drew 200 athletes from 20 countries.

A tough Philippine team composed of Lissa Lesaca, Kristian Guerrero, Dennis Diaz and Crescencio Vidal Jr. plunge into action tomorrow in Bouldering, the only sport-climbing event of the Asian X-Games VI which starts tomorrow.

Filipino junior climbers won the gold and silver medals in both the 2001 and 2002 editions of the annual games.

Robert Cheng's memory lives on

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I SALUTE today a man named Robert Cheng, who had gone back to his Creator (our one and only boss-*tsip* JC) last year.

Robert Cheng it was who put up the Uratex National Open Caddies Golf Championship, the only golf tournament of its kind in the world that has the game's bag-carriers as exclusive participants.

You play golf but have never carried a golf bag all your life, you are ineligible to play. The rules are that strict that Insan Taby Tabaniag, the chief referee, will not mince words hitting anyone trying to bend the parameters of the tournament.

Launched in 1988, the Uratex Open holds the last round of its 15th edition today. I can't wait to see the last-day drama unfold anew at Valley's extremely challenging layout carved out of the mountains of scenic Antipolo.

If I get to finish my homemaking chores at dawn today, I'll be there to renew ties with the men and women behind the Uratex Open, most notable among them Manding Santos, Col. Abe Villanueva, fellow journalist Roger Flores and fellow golf rules man Jake Ayson. These guys have stuck to the Uratex Caddies Open like loyal dogs to their masters.

Hey, fellas, will I get to eat *kalderetang kambing* again today, the way it used to be in the good old days at Capitol?

The man I will miss most when I finally set foot hopefully at Valley this morning is the tournament's founding father himself, Robert Cheng. The guy embodied what philanthropy is all about in this borrowed life of ours.

Free transportation to all caddies from anywhere in the archipelago wishing to join the Uratex Caddies Open.

Free food and free living quarters for a week for each of the 150 or so participants.

Nobody goes home empty-handed as even non-winners, including the last-placer, will have some cash to bring home to the wife after the tournament, not to mention appliances like color TVs and stereo sets staked liberally as raffle prizes.

It was tragic enough that Robert Cheng died at a time when his tournament is almost a cinch to enter the Guinness Book of World Records for its uniqueness. No other tournament in the world can approximate the perks and benefits Robert Cheng annually bestows upon his event's participants, not to mention the morale-boosting effect it transmits to the entire field. With the tournament, the caddy's self-esteem is raised several notches up.

But Robert Cheng's death did not snuff out the vision he's had for the nation's caddies all these years: a better life brought about by a talent getting discovered in the tournament. A victory alone would mean instant seeding for the winner to the national golf team. Cuello. Cruz. Salvador. Bayron. And a lot more. All are former Uratex Caddies Open champions. They've represented the country in tournaments abroad at one time or the other.

The resurrection of the tournament, scrapped last year, is proof that the family of Robert Cheng—his wife Naty, son Big Boy, and daughters Pinky and Peachy—are bent on continuing the legacy of the Uratex patriarch.

Robert Cheng did not die in vain.

***

FASTBREAK. My deepest condolences to the loved ones left behind by Boy Boluso of Roxas City. Boy, who died on Feb. 12, was the son of Ate Lourdes, the first cousin of Prof. Sol F. Juvida of the UP-Diliman College of Arts and Letters. Ate Lourdes is the widow of Kuya Jake, whose other son, the ruggedly handsome Bongbong, is my wedding godson. Boy's sister, Jojie, is also my wedding godchild (the distinguished lawyer Ike Belo, the former INQUIRER president, was my *katuwang*). Boy's remains are in Roxas City, his birthplace. The last time I saw Boy alive was several months ago. Generous to a fault, Boy made that visit of mine to Roxas extremely memorable: He surprised me with a sack of fresh oysters that my *bilas*, Dante Fernandez, dear friend Nelson Almonguera and I partook on the eve of my flight back to Manila. I had a bum stomach the morning after but I couldn't care less. Roxas City breeds the best oysters in the world. You will be missed, Boy B . . . Condolence, too, to Bonjin Bolinao, whose mother died on Tuesday, and to the family of Frankie "Ka Kiko" Evangelista, the broadcaster nonpareil who passed away at age 69 on Feb. 18. Ka Kiko was my golf buddy, whose 6-inch tees have just been declared illegal. Only tees measuring 4 inches are now deemed legal under the new rules of golf. Next time I tee up, I'll dedicate my first drive to Ka Kiko, whose body lies at Arlington Chapels on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Gorres faces Mangubat in crucial fight tonight

By Rey Danseco, *Contributor*

FORMER champions Randy "Destroyer" Mangubat and Z Gorres are both motivated by prospects of big campaigns in the US when they collide in a 10-round superflyweight clash tonight at the Makati Coliseum.

Mangubat, who lost in a WBC flyweight title fight last June, could gain a shot at newly crowned WBO superflyweight champ Mark Johnson either in May or June in the United States if he beats Gorres.

Johnson, who won the title from Fernando Montiel last August, is scheduled to risk his crown for the first time against top ranked challenger Luis Bolanos at Foxwoods Casino Resort in Mashantucket, Connecticut, on March 6.

"Mangubat may fight Johnson if they both win," said Mangubat's business manager, Bebot Elorde, who has strong ties with Hawaiian Fil-American Leon Panoncillo, one of WBO's top officials in Asia Pacific.

If he wins, Gorres has to survive one more tough test against an Australian before he gets a chance to work under noted American trainer Freddie Roach at the same Wild Card gym in Hollywood, California, where Manny Pacquiao trains.

Gorres' ability in a high-level fight is suspect after he got floored four times en route to a TKO loss to virtually unknown Edgar Rodrigo in their RP fly title clash last year.

Bitter basketball . . .

From page A25

gal claimant to the NSA."

Jorge said Bapi has also started elevating its claim to the International Basketball Federation (Fiba), which just recently said it would no longer interfere with the Philippines' internal affairs.

Meanwhile, Dayrit reminded the BAP that it is the POC's authority and responsibility to ensure that NSAs provide deserving athletes the opportunity to represent and give honor to the country.

Dayrit was reacting to reports that the BAP plans to take over the selection of forming and training future national teams without help from the Philippine Basketball Association which had taken care of fielding Asian Games team since 1990.

"We call upon the BAP to open up to other stakeholders especially the PBA and the PBL, in ensuring that our best options in forming a winnable team are taken. We are sure the leaders concerned will make the right moves," he said. *Trina Ibarle, Marc Anthony Reyes, June Navarro*

POC steps . . .

From page A25

"The constitution is on our side and I think they (POC arbitration) will respect the constitution and bylaws of our association," Codiñera told the INQUIRER.

Angping can't be reached for comment, although he was present during Wednesday's arbitration meeting presided over by POC arbitration head Claudio Altura.

POC action is still being awaited in troubled NSAs like cycling, chess and archery.

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ALL SET: Quiazon arrives from the US Tuesday. ROGER MARGALLO

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PDI PHOTO

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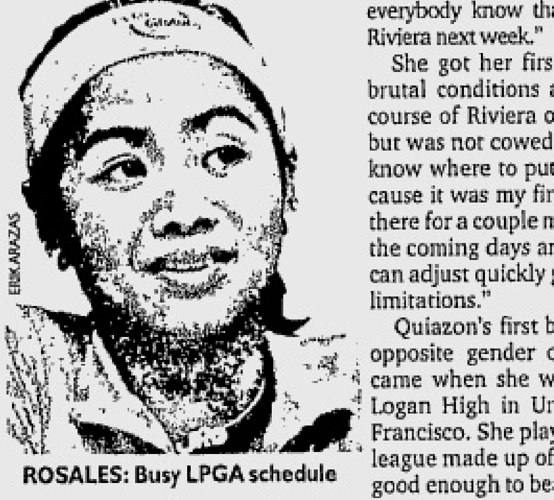

ERIK ARAZAS

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RP X-Gamer bags skateboard gold

KUALA LUMPUR—The Philippines' Anjou Jellicoe Mauricio stunned the highly partisan gallery with a big rail stunt Wednesday night to seize the gold medal in skateboarding's best trick finals of the Asian Junior X-Games V at the Stadium Putra in Bukit Jalil here.

The 14-year-old Mauricio impressed with his perfect execution of the grind down the big rail to narrowly beat Taiwan's Siao Jyun Mi, who had looked all set to snatch the gold medal, and a couple of Malaysian youngsters.

"This (Mauricio's stunt) was definitely the most difficult trick of the weekend," said competition chief judge Sasha Steinhorst, who is also head judge of skateboarding's World Cup.

Mauricio's victory in the competition presented by Toyota came after 2002 champion Shariman Rusdee Morshidi of Malaysia topped the bicycle event to earn another trip to Woodward Camp, the mecca of X-Games, in the United States.

Australian skateboarder Ben Bodnar, who ruled the regular competition in Mauricio's event, and fellow Aussie, in-line skater Rian Arnold, join Morshidi in Woodward Camp.

Siao came back to capture the Big Air gold medal, the final event of the competitions that drew 200 athletes from 20 countries.

A tough Philippine team composed of Lissa Lesaca, Kristian Guerrero, Dennis Diaz and Crescencio Vidal Jr. plunge into action tomorrow in Bouldering, the only sport-climbing event of the Asian X-Games VI which starts tomorrow.

Filipino junior climbers won the gold and silver medals in both the 2001 and 2002 editions of the annual games.

Robert Cheng's memory lives on

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I SALUTE today a man named Robert Cheng, who had gone back to his Creator (our one and only boss-*tsip* JC) last year.

Robert Cheng it was who put up the Uratex National Open Caddies Golf Championship, the only golf tournament of its kind in the world that has the game's bag-carriers as exclusive participants.

You play golf but have never carried a golf bag all your life, you are ineligible to play. The rules are that strict that Insan Taby Tabaniag, the chief referee, will not mince words hitting anyone trying to bend the parameters of the tournament.

Launched in 1988, the Uratex Open holds the last round of its 15th edition today. I can't wait to see the last-day drama unfold anew at Valley's extremely challenging layout carved out of the mountains of scenic Antipolo.

If I get to finish my homemaking chores at dawn today, I'll be there to renew ties with the men and women behind the Uratex Open, most notable among them Manding Santos, Col. Abe Villanueva, fellow journalist Roger Flores and fellow golf rules man Jake Ayson. These guys have stuck to the Uratex Caddies Open like loyal dogs to their masters.

Hey, fellas, will I get to eat *kalderetang kambing* again today, the way it used to be in the good old days at Capitol?

The man I will miss most when I finally set foot hopefully at Valley this morning is the tournament's founding father himself, Robert Cheng. The guy embodied what philanthropy is all about in this borrowed life of ours.

Free transportation to all caddies from anywhere in the archipelago wishing to join the Uratex Caddies Open.

Free food and free living quarters for a week for each of the 150 or so participants.

Nobody goes home empty-handed as even non-winners, including the last-placer, will have some cash to bring home to the wife after the tournament, not to mention appliances like color TVs and stereo sets staked liberally as raffle prizes.

It was tragic enough that Robert Cheng died at a time when his tournament is almost a cinch to enter the Guinness Book of World Records for its uniqueness. No other tournament in the world can approximate the perks and benefits Robert Cheng annually bestows upon his event's participants, not to mention the morale-boosting effect it transmits to the entire field. With the tournament, the caddy's self-esteem is raised several notches up.

But Robert Cheng's death did not snuff out the vision he's had for the nation's caddies all these years: a better life brought about by a talent getting discovered in the tournament. A victory alone would mean instant seeding for the winner to the national golf team. Cuello. Cruz. Salvador. Bayron. And a lot more. All are former Uratex Caddies Open champions. They've represented the country in tournaments abroad at one time or the other.

The resurrection of the tournament, scrapped last year, is proof that the family of Robert Cheng—his wife Naty, son Big Boy, and daughters Pinky and Peachy—are bent on continuing the legacy of the Uratex patriarch.

Robert Cheng did not die in vain.

***

FASTBREAK. My deepest condolences to the loved ones left behind by Boy Boluso of Roxas City. Boy, who died on Feb. 12, was the son of Ate Lourdes, the first cousin of Prof. Sol F. Juvida of the UP-Diliman College of Arts and Letters. Ate Lourdes is the widow of Kuya Jake, whose other son, the ruggedly handsome Bongbong, is my wedding godson. Boy's sister, Jojie, is also my wedding godchild (the distinguished lawyer Ike Belo, the former INQUIRER president, was my *katuwang*). Boy's remains are in Roxas City, his birthplace. The last time I saw Boy alive was several months ago. Generous to a fault, Boy made that visit of mine to Roxas extremely memorable: He surprised me with a sack of fresh oysters that my *bilas*, Dante Fernandez, dear friend Nelson Almonguera and I partook on the eve of my flight back to Manila. I had a bum stomach the morning after but I couldn't care less. Roxas City breeds the best oysters in the world. You will be missed, Boy B . . . Condolence, too, to Bonjin Bolinao, whose mother died on Tuesday, and to the family of Frankie "Ka Kiko" Evangelista, the broadcaster nonpareil who passed away at age 69 on Feb. 18. Ka Kiko was my golf buddy, whose 6-inch tees have just been declared illegal. Only tees measuring 4 inches are now deemed legal under the new rules of golf. Next time I tee up, I'll dedicate my first drive to Ka Kiko, whose body lies at Arlington Chapels on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Gorres faces Mangubat in crucial fight tonight

By Rey Danseco, *Contributor*

FORMER champions Randy "Destroyer" Mangubat and Z Gorres are both motivated by prospects of big campaigns in the US when they collide in a 10-round superflyweight clash tonight at the Makati Coliseum.

Mangubat, who lost in a WBC flyweight title fight last June, could gain a shot at newly crowned WBO superflyweight champ Mark Johnson either in May or June in the United States if he beats Gorres.

Johnson, who won the title from Fernando Montiel last August, is scheduled to risk his crown for the first time against top ranked challenger Luis Bolanos at Foxwoods Casino Resort in Mashantucket, Connecticut, on March 6.

"Mangubat may fight Johnson if they both win," said Mangubat's business manager, Bebot Elorde, who has strong ties with Hawaiian Fil-American Leon Panoncillo, one of WBO's top officials in Asia Pacific.

If he wins, Gorres has to survive one more tough test against an Australian before he gets a chance to work under noted American trainer Freddie Roach at the same Wild Card gym in Hollywood, California, where Manny Pacquiao trains.

Gorres' ability in a high-level fight is suspect after he got floored four times en route to a TKO loss to virtually unknown Edgar Rodrigo in their RP fly title clash last year.

Bitter basketball . . .

From page A25

gal claimant to the NSA."

Jorge said Bapi has also started elevating its claim to the International Basketball Federation (Fiba), which just recently said it would no longer interfere with the Philippines' internal affairs.

Meanwhile, Dayrit reminded the BAP that it is the POC's authority and responsibility to ensure that NSAs provide deserving athletes the opportunity to represent and give honor to the country.

Dayrit was reacting to reports that the BAP plans to take over the selection of forming and training future national teams without help from the Philippine Basketball Association which had taken care of fielding Asian Games team since 1990.

"We call upon the BAP to open up to other stakeholders especially the PBA and the PBL, in ensuring that our best options in forming a winnable team are taken. We are sure the leaders concerned will make the right moves," he said. *Trina Ibarle, Marc Anthony Reyes, June Navarro*

POC steps . . .

From page A25

"The constitution is on our side and I think they (POC arbitration) will respect the constitution and bylaws of our association," Codiñera told the INQUIRER.

Angping can't be reached for comment, although he was present during Wednesday's arbitration meeting presided over by POC arbitration head Claudio Altura.

POC action is still being awaited in troubled NSAs like cycling, chess and archery.

SPORTSWATCH

St. Benilde spikers sweep elims

DEFENDING champion College of St. Benilde swept the elimination round of the men's division of the 2nd National Collegiate Athletic Association Beach Volleyball championship at the La Salle Greenhills Sand Court. St. Benilde defeated San Sebastian College, 2-0 (21-16, 21-13), Philippine Christian University, 2-0 (21-15, 21-9), Letran College, 2-0 (21-14, 21-150 and University of Perpetual Help-Rizal, 2-0 (21-12, 21-10), to end the elims ranked number one. The SSC Stags are No. 2 followed by Letran at No. 3 and San Beda at No. 4. In the women's side, Letran likewise completed a sweep by beating UPH-R, 2-0 (21-16, 21-12), CSB, 2-0 (21-9, 21-16) and San Sebastian, 2-1 (19-21, 21-18, 15-8).

Marcelo cops Enduro King title

JIMBOY Marcelo of Team Castrol-Kawasaki Racing came from behind in both moto heats to cop the Enduro King title in the 2nd leg of 2004 Philippine National Motocross Championship Series held recently in San Fernando City, La Union. Marcelo, a 15-year-old junior of Children of Mary Immaculate College, a De La Salle-supervised school in Valenzuela City, now leads the overall standing and is on track of retaining the title he won in 2002 and last year. The event was organized by MCCI together with MP Turbo and Namssa. "They tried all the tricks to block my son's momentum but he was bent to win this round as I raced prep his trusted Kawasaki KMX-125 R for almost a week," said father and mentor engineer Benjie Marcelo, team manager of the Castrol MX Racing Team. Marcelo's teammate Recto de Leon pulled out a double header as he dominated the executive and power enduro classes while Jimboy who took the second heat moto top spot settled for second after placing fourth in the first moto due to broken shifter after the double jump collision with Bob Orbe. In the beginners production category, Castrol MX's Vincent Gajonera prevailed.

All-students aerobics marathon

PHILIPPINE Normal University plays host to an all-student sports aerobics marathon from 8 a.m. to noon tomorrow at the PNU gym along Taft Avenue. The marathon, held through the PNU physical education department, is open to all physically fit high school and college students. It will be conducted by the Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation (Picaf) led by its secretary general, Ley Fernandez. Winners and runners-up will receive glass trophies and cash prizes, according to Team Ventures, the events management specialists which may be reached at 400-9745 and 522-5953. PNU PE head Prof. Rosanna A. Diana expects a huge turnout from at least 12 colleges and universities in Metro Manila.

RACE LEGEND Legendary race car driver Pocholo Ramirez (left) was chosen as this year's Hall of Fame awardee by the Golden Wheel Foundation. With him is Eric Lejano, national sales manager for Ocuvite of Bausch & Lomb.

National trials for mountain bike

PHILCYCLING, the national federation for cycling, will stage initial national team trials for mountain bike for Luzon this Sunday, February 22, in Taytay, Rizal, and for the Visayas and Mindanao on March 5, 6 and 7 in Danao, Cebu. Interested MTB riders may contact PhilCycling mountain bike commission head Art Cayabyab at 0919-2851362 or call the PhilCycling office at 879-4374 or 879-4378.

Galan rules checkmate tourney

NINE-YEAR-OLD Jan Nigel Galan downed Kristian del Villar in the ninth and final round to rule the junior division in the final evaluation tournament of the 2004 Milo Checkmate Saturday-only clinic held over the weekend at the J&F Divino Building in Quezon City. Galan, a Grade 3 student of Lawang Bato Elementary School in Valenzuela City, posted a perfect score of nine points to cap the junior title in the age-group competition. Eleven-year-old Charles Irvin Manansala of Christian College of Tanauan topped the Under-12 bracket with a perfect score of 7.0 points while Aldous Roy Coronel of Mary Immaculate Academy and James Edward Hernandez of La Immaculada Concepcion won the Under-10 & Under-8 sections, respectively. Other winners were: 7-year-old Malcolm Kwok-Intermediate I; Galan-Beginner 3; Christian Anthony Flores-Beginner 2; Coronel-Beginner 1; Ivan Muit-Preparatory 2nd Level and 6-year-old Rhys de la Cruz-Preparatory 1st level.

Heritage marathon offers come-on

THE CLEAN & Green Foundation Inc.—organizer of the Pasig River Heritage Marathon—is offering participants in the minor running events an attractive come-on. Registrants for the side 10-K, 5-K and 3-K running events will get two free registration forms if they register in groups of ten. Listing of participants is in full swing and registration has been extended to Feb. 20. Forms are available at the C&GFI office, 2nd floor, Benlife Building, Muralla St., Intramuros, Manila. Registration can also be done online at www.heritagemarathon.org. Forms may also be downloaded, filled up and submitted to the above address, if desired.

PCC hosts 4-cock derby tonight

MORE than 50 quality fights will spice up the battle for the championship in Pasay City Cockpit's "ASF Group 4-Cock Derby" tonight. Sponsored by Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Complexor 3000, the derby stakes P300,000 for an entry fee of P10,000. Interested parties may call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750. Participants will be bannered by Alan Tan, fresh from winning the Roligon 14th Anniversary Derby, Joel Fernando of Pampanga, James Uy, Boy de Roca, Boy Royo, LCC Leonard Group, Patrick Antonio, Tony Lasala, Joey Lapid, Raymond Velayo, William Go, Cesar Tangcad, Gerald Go and Rene Medina. Meanwhile, reservation of cockhouses for the "Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 7-Cock Derby" is open. The event is slated March 15, 17 and 19.

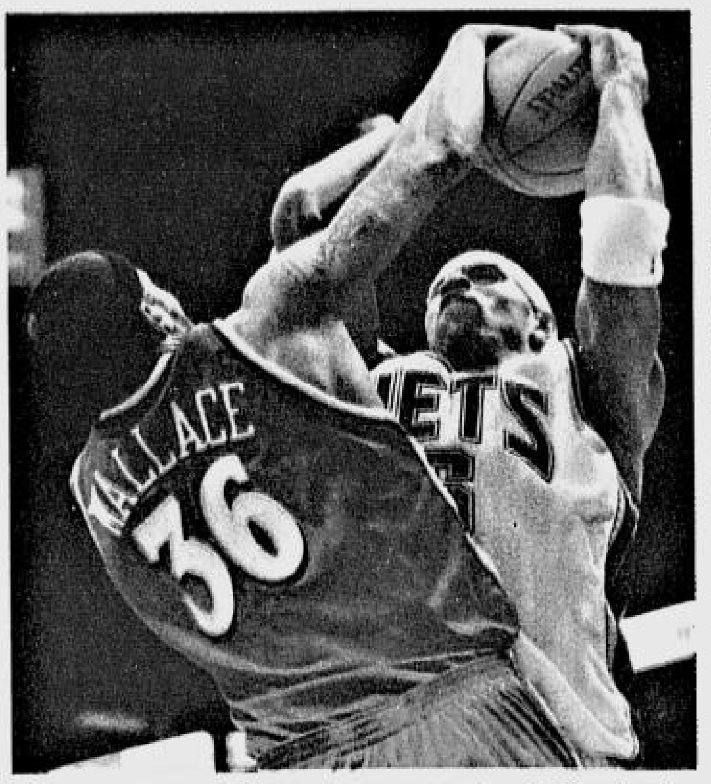
Alvarez, darters Scoop guests

PAUL "Bong" Alvarez, who is bound to play in the United States Basketball League, will grace today's SCOOP Sa Kamayan at the Kamayan Restaurant on West Avenue in Quezon City. Alvarez will see action with the reigning USBL champion Pennsylvania Valleydawgs this year. Also appearing in the session sponsored by Photokina Marketing are members of the Darts Council of the Philippines board headed by Errol Magtubo.

IBSA OFFICIALS PSC Commissioner and IBSA (International Blind Sports Federation) Asia Continental delegate Michael Barredo (3rd from right) welcomes IBSA president Enrique Perez at thestart of the IBSA management committee meeting Wednesday. With them are Alberto Martins Da Costa, Dr. George Challe, Alberto Agudo, Silvia Aldini and Raeburn McLeod.

COACH BEST START

Kidd lifts Nets past Hawks



NETS' Kenyon Martin (right) and Hawks' Rasheed Wallace battle for the ball in the fourth quarter of their NBA game Wednesday. The Nets won, 98-92. EPA

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Lawrence Frank set a record for the best start by an NBA coach with his 10th straight victory when New Jersey defeated Atlanta, 98-92, Wednesday.

The Nets won because of Jason Kidd's 58th career triple-double and big games by Richard Jefferson and Rodney Rogers. Frank shared the record for best coaching start with Kurt Rambis of the Lakers in 1998-99 and Buddy Jeannette of Baltimore Bullets in 1947-48.

"We're happy we got the win," said the 33-year-old Frank, who wasn't good enough to make his high school team, in large part because he was too small at 1.7 meters (5-foot-7). Kidd finished with 15 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists as the Nets won a franchise-record-tying 11th straight game. Jefferson had 16 of his 23 points in the second half and Rogers scored all 10 of his points in the final quarter. Kenyon Martin added 21 points and 10 rebounds for New Jersey.

"It's unbelievable," said Kidd. "You couldn't ask for a better script or you might say it's impossible. With coach Frank and this team, nothing is impossible."

Rasheed Wallace, acquired before the All-Star break in a deal with Portland, had 20 points and six rebounds for the Atlanta Hawks.

Complete results:

Orlando 90, Utah 77; San Antonio 86, Toronto 82; Dallas 114, Cleveland 98; New Jersey 98, Atlanta 92; Detroit 102, Milwaukee 98; New Orleans 120, Washington 98; Portland 101, LA Clippers 86; LA Lakers 100, Golden State 99.

Harris China coach

CLEVELAND—Dallas Mavericks assistant Del Harris will coach China's basketball team at the Athens Olympics. Harris, who will become the first foreigner to guide China in international play, said the Chinese sports ministry approved him as coach on Tuesday. *AP*

Beach volley set Feb. 27

SHOWCASING the country's best in the popular summer sport, the 2004 Nestea Beach Volleyball University Championships unfold its eliminations at the Rockwell sand courts on Feb. 27.

On its eighth edition, the yearly event has drawn 72 teams from all over the country to vie for the lion's share of P500,000 at stake.

The Luzon eliminations, which are set Feb. 27-29, will have 32 teams seeking the chance to compete against the Visayas-Mindanao winners in the national finals on Boracay this April 16-18.

Tournament organizers have shifted Vis-Min beach volleyball action, also held at Rockwell last year, to the Ayala Center in Cebu in this edition to draw a bigger crowd and participation from 20 Southern Philippine contingents.

"It is a good move to hold the Vis-Min leg in Ayala Cebu to bring the event to the Visayas," said Nikkie Limjap, marketing and promotions head of the tournament, during the press briefing at the Rockwell Club yesterday. *Trina Ibarle*

Go gives up post as chess director

DISGRUNTLED with the discord prevailing in the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, sportsman Go Teng Kok yesterday gave up his NCFP directorship.

Go, also the president of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association, sent his resignation papers to lawyer Mat Defensor, the NCFP president, before a scheduled board meeting at the office of lawyer Andres Gatmaitan, the NCFP chair.

"There's no other recourse left for me but to resign," said Go. "I tried to patch up differences among the feuding chess leaders but I failed."

Go, a chess enthusiast and benefactor to many titled players, said he was caught in the middle of the rift between lawyer Sammy Estimo, the NCFP secretary general, and Florencio Campones, honorary lifetime president of the International Chess Federation (Fide).

Aguilar moto show persists in La Union

AGUILAR (inset) shows one of his high-flying acts.

THE REVTEX Rocket Glenn Aguilar road show continues.

Aguilar reaffirmed his status as the country's best rider by dominating both the premier Pro Open and Pro 125 divisions in the second leg of the Philippine National Motocross Championship at Barangay Biday, San Fernando, La Union recently.

The 27-year-old Revtex team captain ruled both categories in awesome fashion, seizing command in all four heats early and making his chief rival Jovie Saulog (second in the Pro 125) stumble in the trail of his dust before a roaring crowd of 35,000.

Bebet Aguilar, Aguilar's teammate, had a chance to finish runner-up on both occasions, but he was disqualified in the Open category for colliding with Saulog. He also failed to finish the Pro 125 due to mechanical problems.

As the first and only Filipino so far to win the prestigious FIM Asian Supercross title last year, Aguilar said everyone is now after his scalp.

"You have to deliver as the Asian champion. You are always under pressure so you have to stay focused," said Aguilar, a record seven-time National Rider of the Year and PSA Awardee, who is also backed by Sidi Boots, Renthal, Oakley, HJC Helmets and Pro Grip.

Underscoring Revtex's dominance of the motocross circuit, three of Aguilar's teammates ruled their respective divisions in similar hi-octane fashion.

Revtex Wonder Boy Kenneth San Andres topped both the Novice 125 and Novice Production classes, while his coach-father Jun-Jun grabbed the Veterans category.

Also scoring for Revtex was Rodel Cameros, who ruled the Expert class of the motorfest hosted by the MCCLU, headed by Mayor Mary Jane C. Ortega, Gov. Victor F. Ortega and Congressman Manuel M. Ortega.

Caltex team manager Ner Marquez Dormiendo said that the Revtex 2T Oil-Aguilar tandem has proven its worth again.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

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Race 2--1. Tool Pusher 2. Fountain of Gold 3. Trail Blazer 4. Cuadro de Alas
Race 3--1. Stingray 2. Count Your Blessings 3. Impromptu 4. My Aday 5. Lucky Beat
Race 4--1. Joshua Tree 2. Cartada Nueve 3. Inner Wheeler
Race 5--1. Kunichiwa 2. Hello Paul 3. Tiger Winnie 4. Touch of the Wind 5. Tribeca
Race 6--1. Silver Eagle 2. Batang Cabu 3. Material Trick 4. Doctor Steve 5. Napa Valley
Race 7--1. Real Gem 2. Vice Free 3. Millennium Man 4. Holy King 5. Strong Element
Race 8--1. My Sheikh 2. Native Prince 3. Mountain Eagle 4. Mr. Lucas
Race 9--1. Flying Free 2. Lady Victoria 3. Zarafun Mo 4. Brainchild 5. Kantayok 6. Super Magic

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The CompanY at Hard Rock Café

SHOW TIME

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Hard Rock Café teams up with Colt Ice, Lipton Ice Tea, and 96.3 WRock in presenting The CompanY.

The concert series is part of Hard Rock's Music for Life advocacy campaign. The CompanY's shows will be field with standard favorites from the group.

Featured on regular nights at Hard Rock are Silk (Mondays), Pido with Take One (Tuesdays), RJ Jacinto (Wednesdays), Devotion (Thursdays), Dimsum Band (Fridays), Serenity (Saturdays), and 9MM (Sundays).

For reservations call 893-4661 to 64.

THE COMPANY

'People don't care ...

From page A29

"But unlike Anna," Mandy points out, "I don't have a mayhem of bodyguards following me. Neither do I need to wear wigs so I would not be recognized when I go out shopping. People just say hello, and when I walk by I just hear them say 'That's Mandy Moore.' People just want an autograph or to say hi, and I am lucky that I don't have any weird or scary experience that will make me feel truly overwhelmed."

No to nudity

Asked whether she really did that nude scene by the river, Moore laughs and explains, "You know that wasn't me, do you? It was a body double. So I was shocked when one lady journalist said she saw my boobs. 'Absolutely not,' I said. It doesn't make sense to me not to show my butt but let my boobs hang out. I am a very pretty modest person. When I read that nude part in the script, I mentally skipped it and said to myself, 'Oh, that will be taken care of later.' And we did."

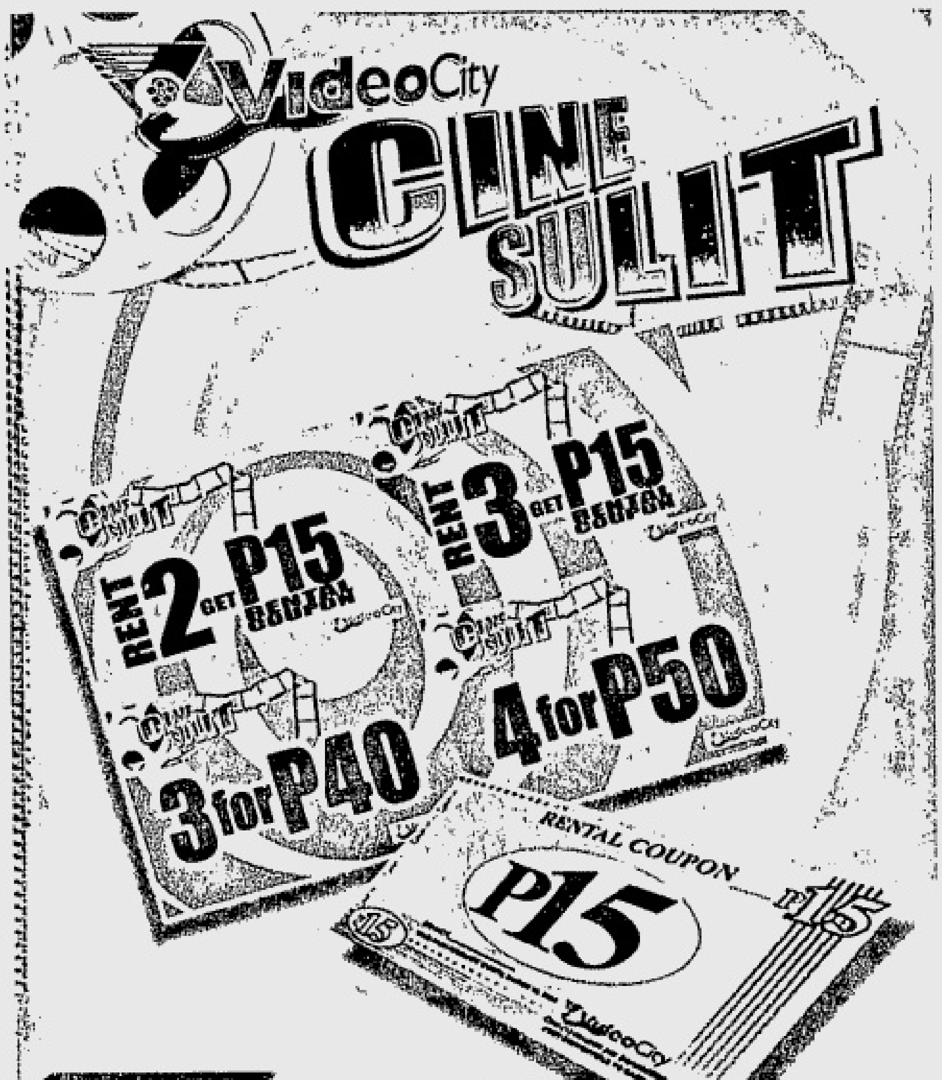
She insists, "I have to do what feels right for me. I wouldn't feel comfortable if someone was holding my hands just to assure me that this is what I have to do to be a part of this film. What you see is what you get with me."

Enjoys family

Mandy, who made her feature film debut as the bitchy cheerleader in the comedy hit "The Princess Diaries," notes that compared to her character in her latest comedy movie, "I have much more freedom."

She adds, "I can't even sit here and begin to imagine what life would be like for her. Honestly, I knew going down this path that chaos would ensue, but poor Anna was born into that kind of life. It was a constant thing from day one. So I can see how you can be a bit bitter about the situation of not being able to live your life."

Mandy, who still lives with her family, admits that she loves living with her parents because "I love the perks of living at home. My mom cooks for me. She brings me a hot cup of tea. My dad still tucks me into bed. I know that one of these days I have to leave home and be independent. But right now, I want to enjoy my family."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what to watch

Romance

"MILAN"

The story follows the journey of naive Lino (Piolo Pascual) as he searches for his wife, Mary Grace, who has been missing since she left for Italy to work as a domestic helper. Arriving in Milan, Lino's one and only way of contacting Mary Grace botches up. But as fate would have it, he comes across Jenny (Claudine Barretto), a beautiful Italian-speaking Filipina who helps him find his wife. Both found themselves drawn to each other.

now showing

On its second week
Claudine Barretto
Piolo Pascual
Milan

MTRCB Rating: P13

DIAL 8339999 for screening schedules

up next

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ALABANG TOWN
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Feb. 28 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Feb 29 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm

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Cinema 2 11:10, 2:25, 5:40, 9:00
NOVALICHES
Cinema 7 10:10, 11:40, 2:30, 5:20, 8:30

MTRCB Rating: R-18

For other screening schedules, pls. call our MOVIE ACCESS no: 635-5555
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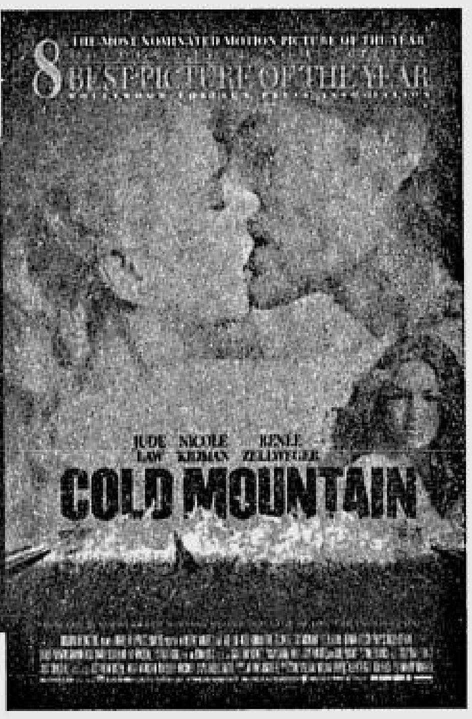
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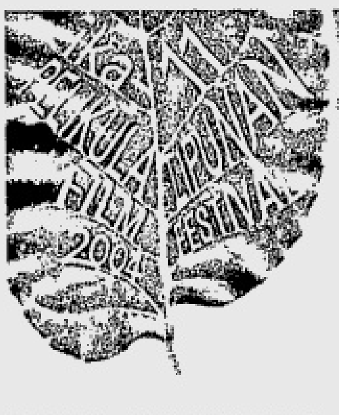
Pelikula at Lipunan Film Festival 2004

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BEST ACTRESS Samantha Morton
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR Djimon Hounsou
BEST SCREENPLAY Jim Sheridan, Naomi Sheridan & Kirsten Sheridan

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

FOX SEARCHLIGHT
STAR
INQUIRER

OPENS FEBRUARY 25 AT
AYALA CINEMAS

JACK NICHOLSON
DIANE KEATON
KEANU REEVES
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Nicholson & Keaton: 'Something' else

Academy Award winners Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton star in a sparkling and sophisticated romantic comedy from acclaimed writer/director Nancy Meyers (What Women Want, Father of the Bride), which proves that in matters of the heart, sometimes you can teach an old playboy new tricks.

Harry Sanborn (Jack Nicholson) is a New York music mogul with a libido much younger than his years. He has the world on a string — and a string of beautiful young girlfriends to prove it. During a romantic rendezvous with his newest girlfriend, Marin at her mother's Hamptons beach house, Harry develops chest pains and eventully winds up being nursed by Marin's reluctant mother, Erica Barry (Diane Keaton) — a successful divorced New York playwright. In the process, Harry develops more heart pangs — the romantic kind — for Erica, a woman who is finally right for him in every way.

However, some habits die hard, and when Harry hesitates to pursue Erica, his charming thirty-something doctor (Keanu Reeves) becomes smitten with her. Harry undergoes a true change of heart when he fights to win Erica back.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

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Live A.I.D.S. Twenty: The Repeat at Music Museum

SHOW TIME

THE PHENOMENAL comedy variety show Live A.I.D.S. upholds its glorious 20-year tradition with a repeat at the Music Museum on Feb. 21.

A.I.D.S. stands for Ang Istoryang Dinebelop ng Samaskom.

The show, Live A.I.D.S. ran for the first time in 1985. It is run by UP SAMASKOM, a UP organization composed mostly of students of UP Mass Communication. The organization has produced several big names in the entertainment and advertising industry: Giselle Sanchez, Tuesday Vargas, Rene Facunla (Ate Glow), Raymond Lauchengco, RS Francisco, Peter Acuña, Jeffrey Jeturian, Chris Violago, Lei Alviz, Coney Macatuno, Wency Cornejo, Kim Atienza, Kris Gorra and Jerry Sineneng, among other talents.

Live A.I.D.S. features comic monologues that never fail to elicit laughter from the audience.

Herbert Samonte opens the current Live A.I.D.S. RS Francisco performs as a nuisance candidate running for President. Ate Glow brings to life GMA. Jaja Bolivar plays the character Miriam Defensive Fort Santiago in a diaphragm wrecking monologue. The flamboyant, sexy Giselle Sanchez completes the powerhouse cast.

The repeat performance of Live A.I.D.S. 20 is sponsored by Kenny Rogers and Sathura Wigs. Tickets are available at the UP College of Mass Communication. Contact Erika Dandal at 0918-3336695 for more information.

FRANCISCO

'People don't care . . .

From page A31

tences with "blahs" or "whoas," while throwing her hands up in the air. She breaks into a flashy smile that highlights her be-dimpled face. She might also slouch or bend over to make sure she gets your point. Unconsciously, she also plays with her silver ring or water bottle while explaining things.

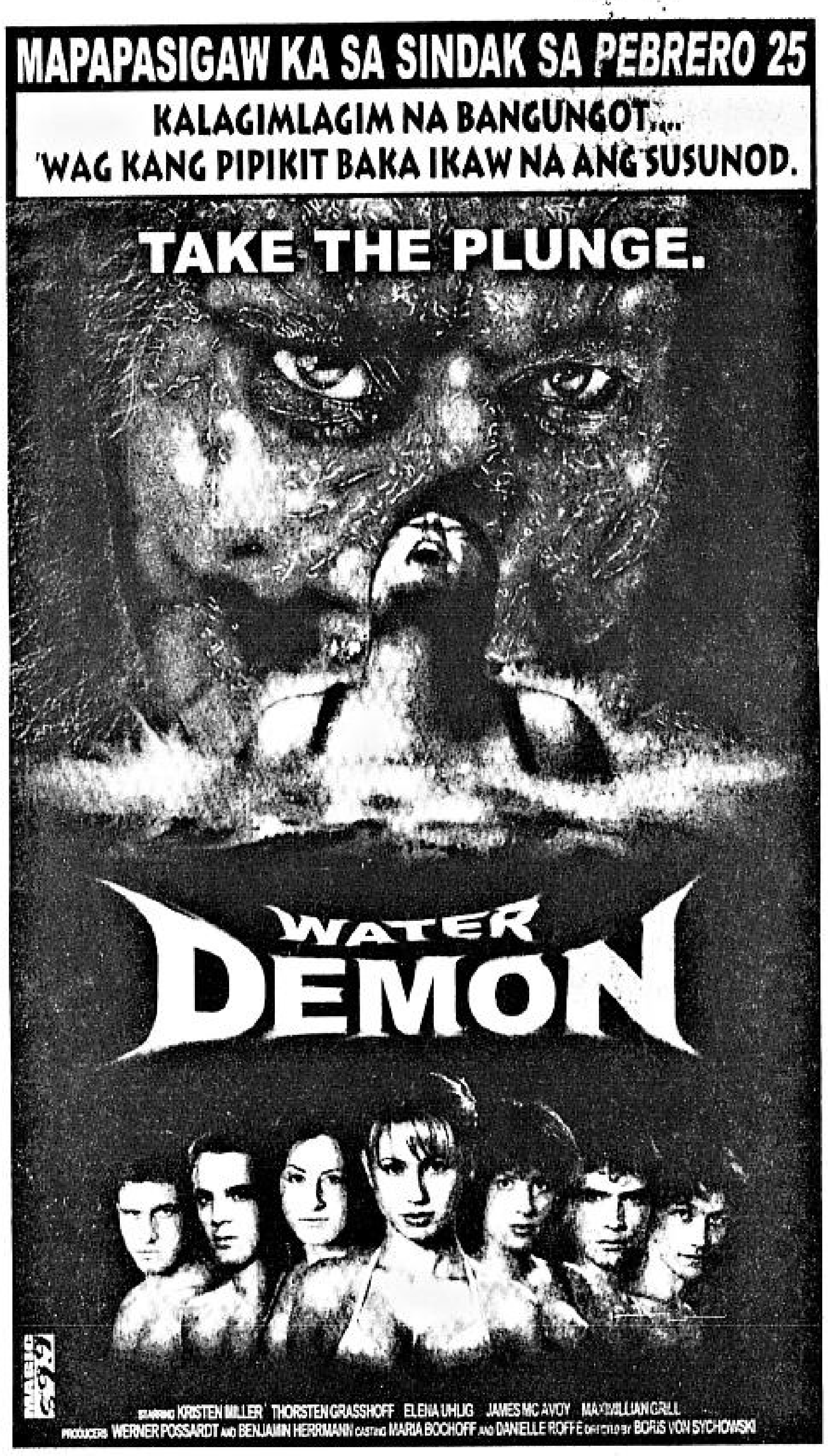
Freedom

Portraying the overprotected daughter of the President of the United States, Anna Foster, in the movie directed by Andy Cadiff ("Leave it to Beaver"), Mandy notes that like the character she plays, she also has the paparazzi following her around and has almost no privacy, too.

She plays the only child of America's leader in "Chasing Liberty," who tries to escape from the media and her bodyguards to experience privacy and freedom.

Accompanying her dad to a diplomatic trip in Europe, she flees from the public eye and bumps into a charming British, Ben Calder (stage and TV actor Matthew Goode) who helps her savor a European getaway.

PEOPLE/ A28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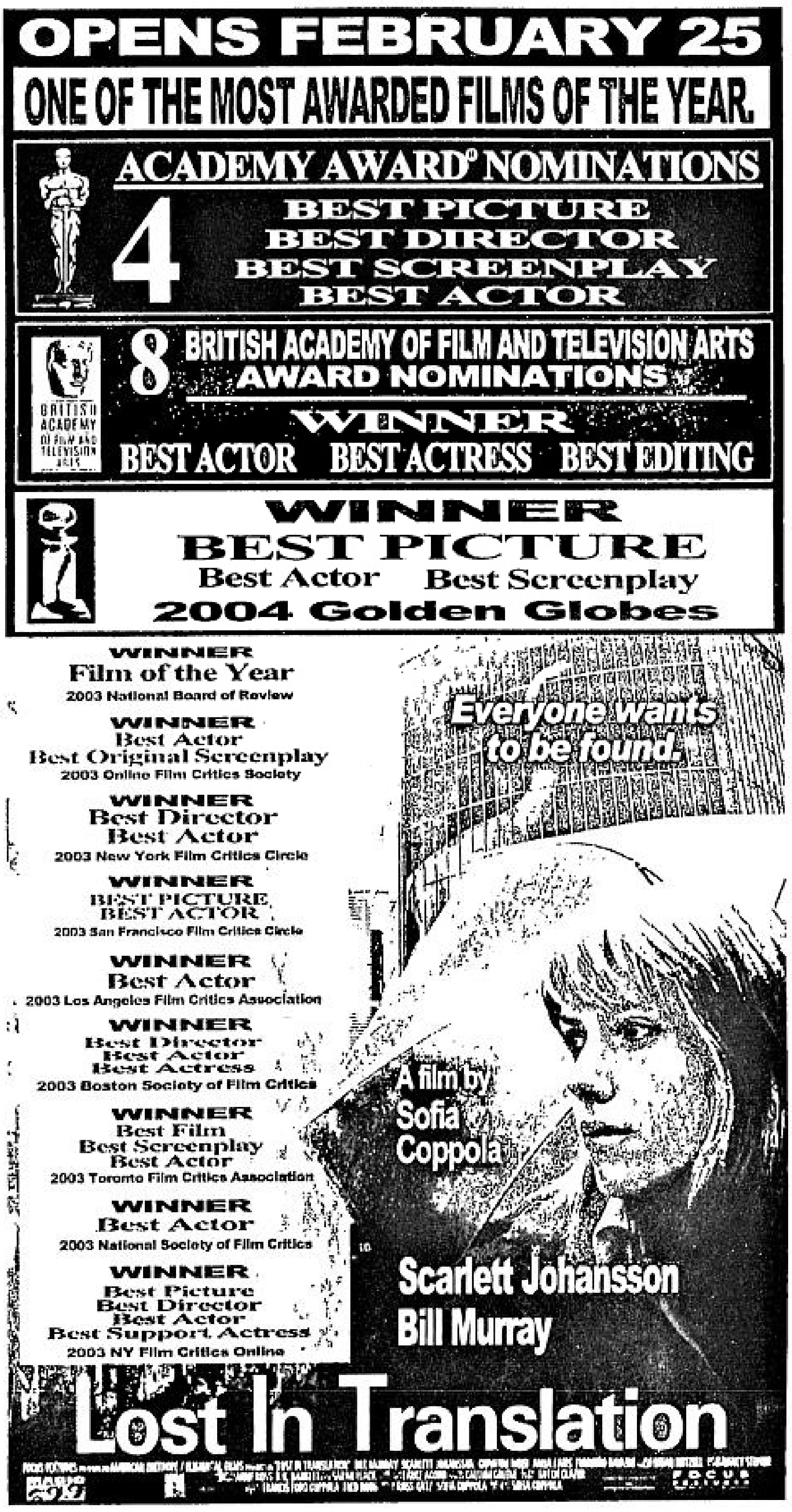
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2003 Online Film Critics Society
WINNER
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Best Actor
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BEST ACTOR
2003 San Francisco Film Critics Circle
WINNER
Best Actor
2003 Los Angeles Film Critics Association
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Ali 2	MILAN
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Runaway Jury marks the first pairing of Hollywood legends GENE HACKMAN and DUSTIN HOFFMAN.

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CHASING LIBERTY PG13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	21 GRAMS R18 1::35, 4:15, 6:55, 9:35	RUNAWAY JURY R13 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20

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Jaya needs to loosen up

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AFTER **Arnell Ignacio** left GMA for ABS-CBN, his "K-The Video Challenge" musical quiz show was left without a host. So, GMA had to do some quick thinking, and picked a replacement in the person of **Jaya**.

Last Feb. 15, she made her debut as host of "K," and we tuned in to see if she would pass muster.

Despite some glitches due to nervousness, Jaya did well enough, and kept the show brisk and fairly entertaining. But she stuck pretty much to the basics and didn't give the program the personal and comedic touches that Arnell was able to provide.

To be fair to Jaya, she's a good singer like Arnell, but she isn't particularly strong in comedy and ad-libbing, skills that came naturally to the show's previous host.

This is because he had his start in show biz as a sing-along master—a job that requires a motor mouth and a penchant for impromptu comedy.

Well, we can expect Jaya to warm up and loosen up in succeeding episodes, and she will soon be joined by **Allan K**, so she can more equably share hosting chores with him.

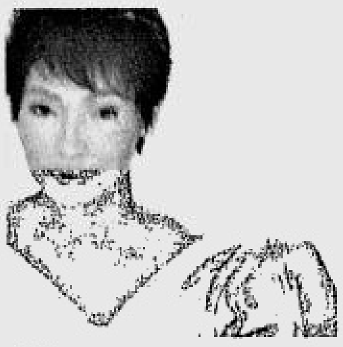
In future, however, Jaya should inhibit herself from singing along with the contestants, because this could confuse or rattle them when they're trying hard to concentrate.

Competing on the show is so difficult that contestants need all of the musical knowledge and focus they can summon up. This is because the program's format requires them to know the music and lyrics to many songs.

In fact, we daresay that this kind of program can do well only in the Philippines, where so many people know so many songs—and can sing them well.

This combination of abilities goes beyond plain musical knowledge, and evinces a total fascination with music that few other countries possess.

Last Sunday, quite a number of the contestants did very well—among them, **Roselle Nava, Malik and RJ Rosales**, who won the top prize. It was thrilling to hear them going from one song snippet to the next in dizzying progression.



JAYA

They even did well when they didn't know the songs they were "singing!" They came up with the correct lyrics through sheer musical instinct or educated guesses based on the context of the songs, or their rhyming pattern. Only in the Philippines, indeed.

RJ won the hearts of viewers when he made his driver the beneficiary of the show's *K-Hilingan* special prize. He made it possible for his driver to fulfill his wish to go to Cebu to visit his son, whom he hadn't seen for seven years.

Moments like this show how the program can have a lot of heart. All the more reason, then, for Jaya to get more comfortable about hosting the show, so she can infuse it with her own signature involvement.

'The Emperor's Club'

KEVIN Kline's latest starrer, "The Emperor's Club," casts him as a selfless teacher in a school for future leaders where most of the students are sons of politicians and wealthy men.

The plot thickens when a US senator's son arrives and infects his classmates with his devil-may-care attitude, and they get into one mischief after another, thus shattering the school's decorum.

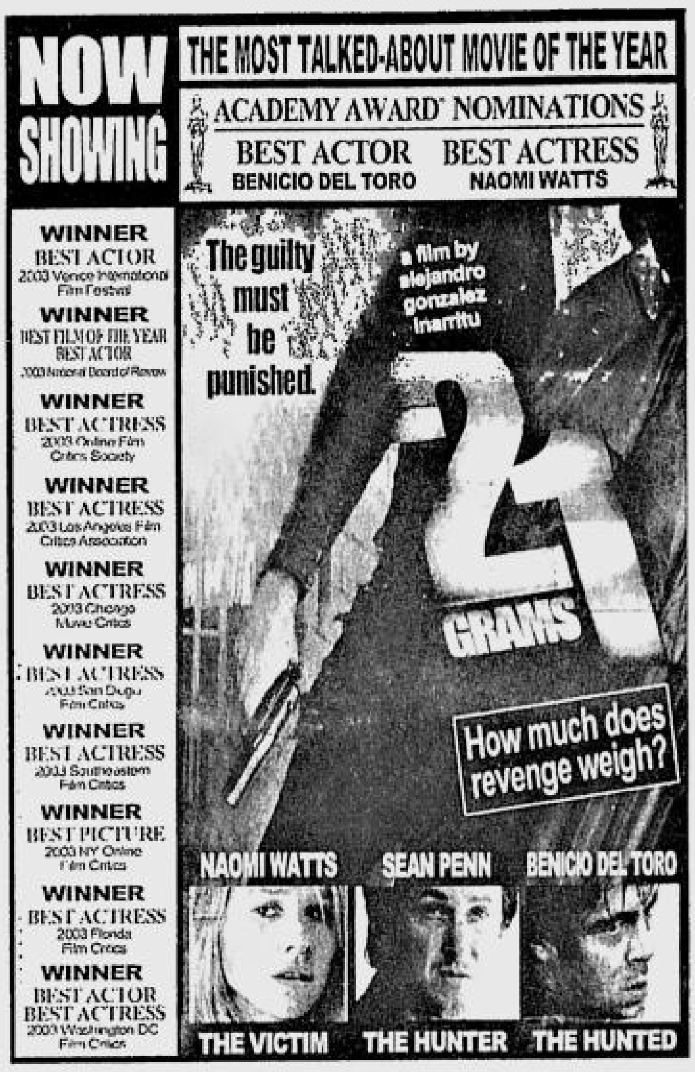
Instead of throwing his hands up, however, the teacher takes this as a challenge, and succeeds in getting through to the problem student. It isn't easy but important lessons are learned, and an outstanding leader is produced, thanks to his mentor's faith in him.

"The Emperor's Club" is directed by **Michael Hoffman** from a script by Neil Tolkin, adapted from a novella by **Ethan Canin**.

New singer

NEW singer **Rebekah** will be **Kuh Ledesma**'s special guest in a concert on March 20 at Kuh's Hacienda Isabella in Tagaytay. Also performing is Kuh's daughter, **Isabella**, who will launch her show biz career this year. Call 551-7253.

Rebekah has a distinct singing style, going from husky to jazzy and from soothing to soaring, enabling her to interpret a wide range of songs. No wonder Kuh is betting that her latest find will hit it big this year.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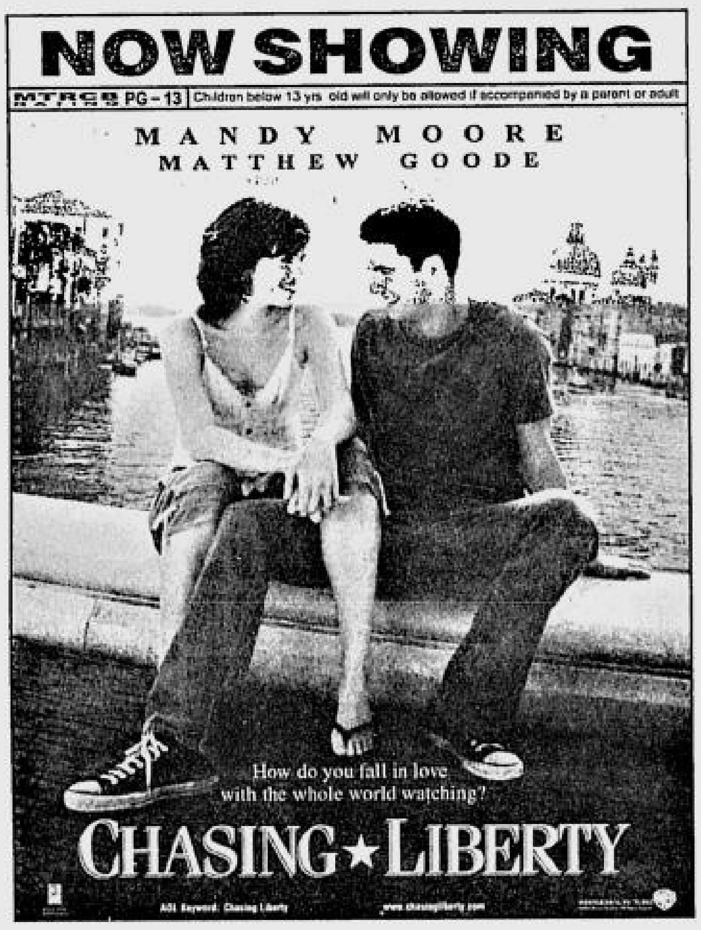
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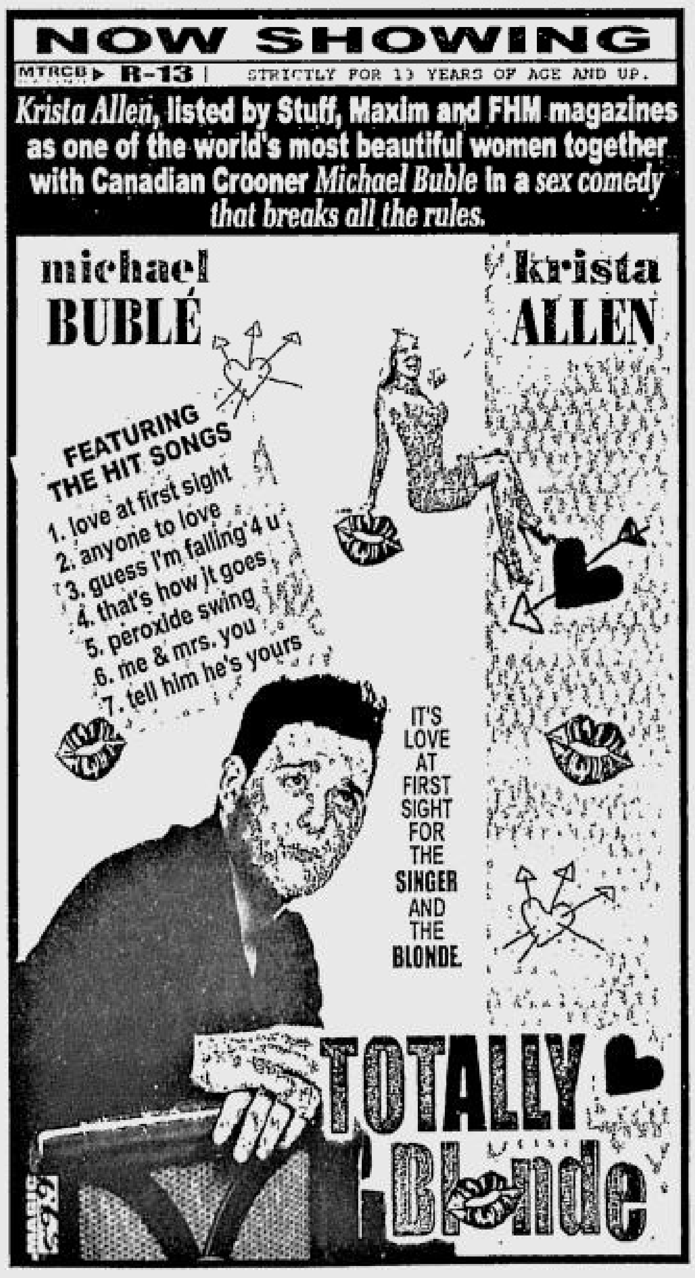
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krista ALLEN
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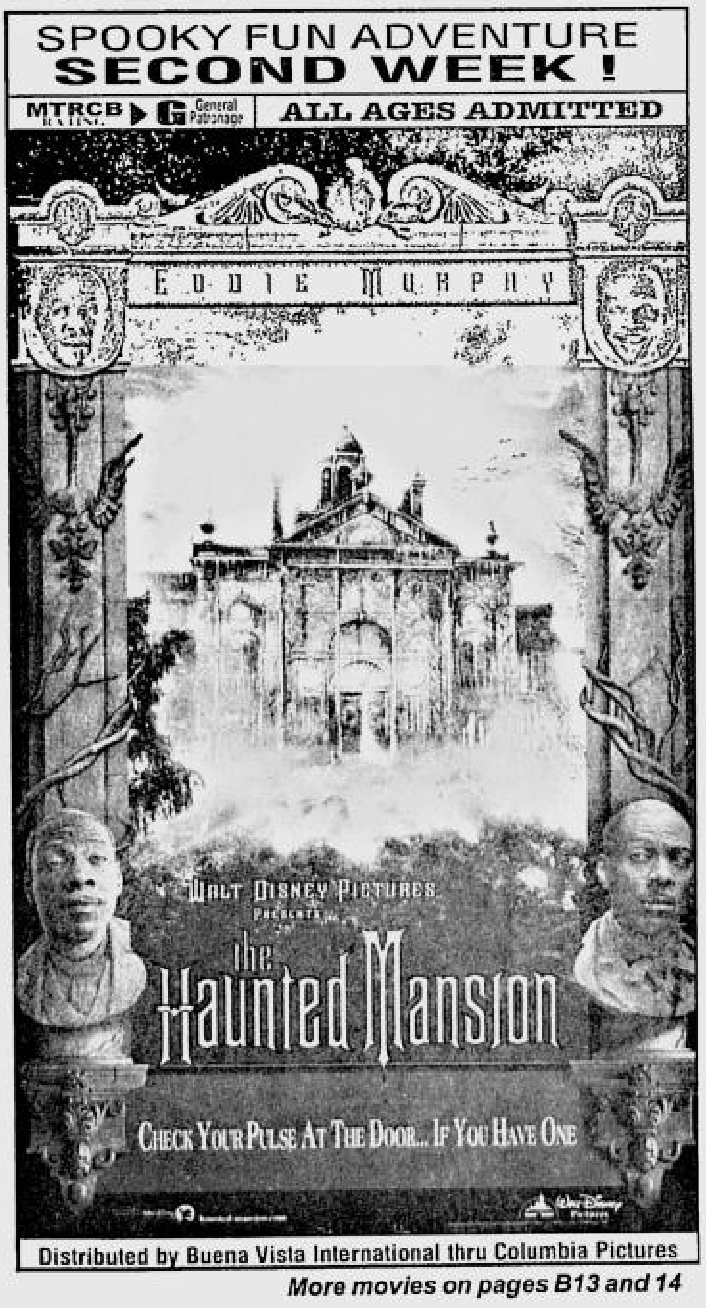
2. anyone to love
3. guess i'm falling 4 u
4. that's how it goes
5. peroxide swing
6. me & mrs. you
7. tell him he's yours
IT'S LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT FOR THE SINGER AND THE BLONDE
TOTALLY Blonde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More movies on pages B13 and 14

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Bold starlet dumped by Bb. Pilipinas beauty pageant

Juliana Palermo to try joining again next year

By Marinel R. Cruz

SEXY actress Juliana Palermo turned down offers to do sex movies. She also stayed away from bars and clubs.

All this she did to prepare herself for the 2004 Binibining Pilipinas beauty pageant.

But Juliana, 18, told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview last Wednesday that she was barred from the beauty contest "because I'm a sexy star."

"Is there a law that keeps actresses doing sexy films from joining a beauty pageant? If there's none, then what they did to me was discrimination."

Juliana, lead star of Tikoy Aguiluz's "www.xxx.com," said she avoided going to night spots "because I didn't want them to say I'm on the prowl."

Topless Miss Greece

Juliana was not the only beauty pageant aspirant who appeared naked in movies. Evelina Papantoniou, who eventually won the Miss Greece in 2001, posed topless in a Greece men's magazine similar to FHM, according to pageant analyst Christopher Cahilig.

On Jan. 27, she passed the initial screening for the Binibining Pilipinas and was asked to return for a final screening last Monday, according to the actress.

But when the Binibining Pilipinas Charities Inc. on Wednesday announced the contestants competing in the May pageant, Juliana's name did not come up.

She recounted that during the first screening, she had gone through a long interview session.

Miss Kadayawan, Mutya ng Davao

"When I was asked to tell something about myself, I told them I'm a sexy star," Juliana said. "But I'm willing to give it all up if I were given the chance to join the pageant. In fact, I haven't done anything for the past few months.

"I really thought I would get in. *Ang sama ng loob ko* (I felt so bad)," she added. "There was this hint that I'll get in. One of the judges even said 'you'll be busy the whole month of February until March so you better be ready for that.'"

Born in Davao, Juliana was raised in the United States. She won the local beauty search Miss Kadayawan last August. In 2002, she was crowned Mutya ng Davao.

Juliana said she left Davao for Manila hoping join the nationwide pageant. But when she arrived, she was offered to do "www.xxx.com" for Maverick Films, and accepted the role.

She has since become a columnist of the local franchise of FHM called "Sex Confidential."

"I really wanted to join Binibini even before I signed a contract with Maverick," she said. "When I did sign up, I asked permission if I could at least try (joining the pageant)."

Still, Juliana said she was not discouraged by the snub.

"It was difficult for me, not working and just staying in the house," she said. "But I'm still young. I'll apply until they take me. They'd have to deal with me for six more years."

Pageant preparations

Juliana said she prepared for the pageant physically and emotionally. She dyed her hair darker, tried to gain more weight, practiced wearing high-heeled shoes, and even dressed differently.

"I was told that as far as these judges were concerned, it didn't matter how many years ago I appeared in a sexy movie. I still did it and it would still appear on my record. I'm really hurt. I could've done well."

PALERMO: I feel so bad.

'People don't care about me'

But Mandy Moore says she's lucky unlike Britney

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
LA Correspondent

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

LOS ANGELES—Recent Manila visitor Mandy Moore recalls an incident when "a couple of people tried to follow me home. But I am so perceptive to that sort of thing that I noticed it right off the bat. So, I went to the police station right away. Then they disappeared. It's creepy for anyone. Thank God I don't deal with it on a regular basis."

Mandy, who recently released her fourth album, "Coverage," points out that "in comparison to the Britney Spears and Christina Aguileras of the world, I am lucky that not every quote that I make is thrown back at my face. People leave me alone and they don't care about me. I like it that way. I could still do what I want to do and at the end of the day, I could have a life."

She laughs, obviously amused by what she just said.

Peaceful life

"My life is really peaceful right now," she says, turning pensive this time. "It's not in a frantic pace at all. There's nothing to be unhappy about. I have a great family, great relationship (with tennis star Andy Roddick), great career and all of that, and I'm just 19!"

Then she calmly adds: "Life is good. I have no complaints."

The Florida native simply couldn't contain her excitement about the city during this interview at a five-star hotel for her Warner Bros. Pictures romantic comedy debut, "Chasing Liberty."

"I love Manila," she says, her eyes twinkling. "I want to go back! I had such a good time! My visit there was so cool."

Dressed in a peach blouse and white pants, and sporting a pair of silver chandelier earrings, the 19-year-old pop star recounts her Manila trip.

"When I arrived at the airport, people were waiting for me. And everyone was so nice.

"There were 15,000 people at my concert and everybody was singing. They knew all my songs and they were singing along with me. I am not used to that, and so I was really taken aback and was so surprised by it."

MANDY: I love Manila.

Mandy's first live concert in Manila was held at the Araneta Coliseum.

The following day, she performed at the MTV Summit at The Fort in Taguig where she was surprised by the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Honored by GMA presence

One of Hollywood's hottest rising stars, Mandy remembers that "the President went up on stage briefly, said a short speech and then voila, she left. It was like a whirlwind! But I was really very honored that she came."

Moore, who caught public attention in 1999 with the release of her debut album, "So Real," is the picture of an effervescent, confident teenage girl who has a very positive outlook in life. She punctuates her sen-

PEOPLE/ A29

Anne Curtis can't live without cell phone, anti-dandruff shampoo

NEXT to her cell phone, the most important thing in the life of teenage heartthrob Anne Curtis is her shampoo.

Her long, smooth hair is testimony to the shampoo's benefits, which she endorses in a television commercial.

But Anne, 18, claims she did not audition for this Head and Shoulders commercial.

"I just found out one day that I would be doing the commercial," she relates.

Princess role

She was only 12 and fresh from Melbourne, Australia when a talent scout for product commercials spotted her eating with her family at a hamburger joint. She did not speak a word of Tagalog then, and her Australian father was skeptical about his daughter joining a glamour industry. But Anne's Filipina mother insisted that her daughter take the plunge. Anne then landed the role of a prin cess in Viva's fantasy flick "Magic Kingdom". She admits that she's always wanted to be a princess.

"My first step in show biz was also a moment of glory for me," Anne recalls. "It was such a beautiful movie, and I couldn't ask for more for a first attempt."

But the Aussie beauty claims she's no royalty.

"I like simple things," she confesses. "You can take me anywhere. I am not picky about where I would be eating. I really am not fuzzy."

She admits, however, that she's the baby in the family, and is also "babied by my *barkada*."

It's probably her fragile looks—an unmistakable blend of Asian fragility and the toughness of a Western heritage—that makes Anne stand out among the multitudes of movie star wannabes.

ANNE Curtis says her moment of glory was appearing as a princess in her first movie.

With the Pan-Asian look as the current peg for commercial models, Anne has become a hit, too, in this field, something she did not expect when she first started appearing as a guest in TV soaps like "Ikaw Na Sana." Her stint as a mainstay of the teen-oriented "TGIS" sealed her inevitable stardom.

Devil's daughter

Playing the role of the devil's daughter in the suspense thriller "Ika-13 Kapitulo", was a turning point in her career, according to the actress. She says the part challenged her no end since it ran counter to her sweet image, but gave her show biz persona a new dimension.

The film fest movie "Filipinas" saw Anne among a sterling cast of dramatic greats, including Metro Manila Film Fest 2003 best actress Maricel Soriano, and Anne's personal favorite, Dawn Zulueta.

Now seen regularly in the gag show "Nuts Entertainment," Anne once again shows local audiences her versatility.

Tapped to be the newest celebrity endorser for Head and Shoulders Shampoo, Anne was a natural for the brand, according to Kate Yu, Procter & Gamble's assistant brand manager the shampoo.

Fits the bill perfectly

"She fits the bill so perfectly. The Head and Shoulders celebrity isn't just any celebrity. She is approachable, pretty, stylish, hip and sexy. And Anne is all that," explains Kate. "Despite being very young, she appeals to a large and diverse group of people. She's known for her long hair, and she's one of the prettiest faces in Philippine show biz today."

Just as the product promised, Anne's long hair is silky-smooth and full of life. She swears by Head and Shoulders Shampoo, now also available in sachets with 33 percent more conditioners, not only in her TV commercial for the product, but also in her private life. Describing herself as a cowgirl and a great adventurer, Anne has found herself in unglamorous situations. But dandruff has never been a problem with her since she started using Head and Shoulders.

"It's really so dependable," she enthuses. "I can't be without it."

Just like her cell phone.

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PANAGBENGA SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

DATE	ACTIVITY	VENUE
Feb. 20	SMART Night at the Market Encounter	Melvin Jones Football Field
Feb. 21	"Shake Baguio Shake" Food & Strawberry Shake Fest	Malcolm Square Parade Route to Athletic Bowl
	Fireworks Competition	Baguio Athletic Bowl
Feb. 22	Parade of Floats	Parade Route to Athletic Bowl
Feb. 23-29	"Session Road In Bloom" exhibits, food stalls & nightly concerts	Session Road
Feb. 29	Closing Ceremonies	Athletic Bowl

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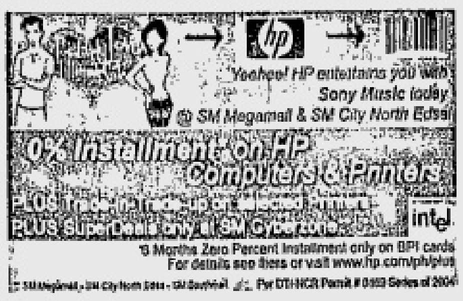
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PLDT sees ₱18-B net profit in '04

By Clarissa S. Batino

PROPELLED by huge earnings from its mobile phone subsidiary, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday reported a net income of P11.18 billion for 2003, up 272 percent from the previous year's P3 billion.

The dominant carrier controlling cash-rich Smart Communications Inc. and losing Pilipino Telephone Corp. posted consolidated net revenues of P16.88 billion, of which P16.12 billion came from the profitable mobile firm.

This year, outgoing PLDT president Manuel V. Pangilinan said the country's dominant telecommunications company should improve its net earnings to between P17 billion and P18 billion and sustain its debt-reduction strategy so it could start paying dividends again to common shareholders by next year.

"The management sees no boundaries in terms of growing the mobile phone business. Our objective is to put a phone in the hands of every Filipino," said Pangilinan, who was named PLDT chair during yesterday's board meeting.

Pangilinan is managing director and chief executive of PLDT parent First Pacific Co. Ltd. and he would have to spend most of his time in Hong Kong.

In yesterday's board meeting, PLDT directors also appointed Smart president Napoleon Nazareno as concurrent president and CEO of PLDT.

PLDT's net earnings were shaved by billions in pesos of provisioning for losses due to failed ventures in cable television and satellite, unrecovered receivables from previous investments and expenses related to job cuts.

Smart grew its profits by 160 percent or by P9.92 billion from P6.2 billion in 2002 as its subscriber base, together with Piltel's Talk 'N Text's, hit nearly 13 million in end-2003 from 8.6 million a year ago.

MANUEL V. Pangilinan

PLDT's landline business suffered a net loss of P1.85 billion as the changing consumer bias for mobile phones pared down earnings from the local exchange and national long distance operations. The fixed-line business, however, derived some growth from the international operations as well as corporate data business.

The call-center business, ePLDT, posted a net income of P22 million, but this was wiped out by provisioning.

Piltel would report its 2003 performance in March. Pangilinan said the losing wireless subsidiary had restructured P21 billion in debts.

"PLDT's profitability would continue to be driven by Smart's strong performance while the fixed-line business would provide stable growth. Once we bring down our debt below $2 billion, the company's profitability would improve," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan said he would remain an active member of the PLDT board to ensure that the company would meet its targets considering that the Filipino firm is the biggest profit-contributor to First Pacific.

"I would stay very much involved with PLDT although no longer with the day-to-day operations," he said.

POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

Smart defers IPO to 2006

CITING poor market conditions and an uncertain political situation, Smart Communications Inc. yesterday said it would defer the timetable of its initial public offering to 2006, at the earliest, or even as far back as 2007, from the August 2004 mandated by its congressional franchise.

Company chair Manuel V. Pangilinan yesterday ruled out the possibility of merging Smart with another Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. subsidiary, Pilipino Telephone Corp., or doing a backdoor listing of Smart through Piltel.

Smart and Piltel are both wholly owned units of PLDT.

"I doubt whether we could meet the August 2004 deadline set by the franchise. The earliest time we could do (a Smart IPO) is on 2006 but the ideal time for us is to do it by 2007," Pangilinan said.

He said Piltel must first focus on restructuring its debt rather than rationalizing its equity.

He said if oil companies that were also required by the law to list their shares in the stock market were allowed to defer their IPO due to bad market conditions, Smart could use the same argument.

"It is difficult to plan given the political uncertainties. We would rather wait until the situation clarifies itself. We are not in a hurry, we have to be flexible," he added.

The announcement dashed the hopes that the IPO this year of the country's biggest mobile phone company would revive a moribund stock market.

"Undertaking an IPO during these uncertain times is not conducive to shareholder value," Pangilinan noted.

He said Smart would pursue an IPO once PLDT has substantially reduced its debts and the fixed-line business "could stand on its own."

PLDT's total debts stood at $2.9 billion as of end-2003 and the company said it would chop another $350-$370 million off its liabilities this year.

"By the end of 2006, we would like to see our debts go down to about $1.3 billion, which should make the landline business more profitable," Pangilinan said.

He said that the management would approach the IPO with a strategy most fair to shareholders.

"We have to allow the cashflow (of Smart) to go to PLDT so debt can be serviced. We want to get out of the debt woods first."

Analysts were worried that a Smart IPO would drag down the profitability and share price of PLDT, a concern that Pangilinan did not use to share.

"We would still own 70 percent of Smart, so it's not the end for PLDT. It's not a fatal wound. Now, we're just maintaining our structure to continue our liability management exercise," Pangilinan earlier said. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Peso falters to 56.20 to $1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday threatened to break past historic lows in the wake of mass protests hounding the Supreme Court's deliberation on the citizenship of leading presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

The local currency closed at the intra-day low of 56.20 to the dollar, hitting the weakest close previously recorded, but the policy-making Monetary Board of the central bank saw no need to defend the currency through any monetary tightening measure.

Yesterday's closing was only two ticks away from the all-time intra-day low of 56.22 against the US dollar at the Philippine Dealing System.

The peso shed 7.5 centavos from Wednesday's closing rate of 56.125 to the dollar.

Emerging from the weekly meeting of the Monetary Board, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said that while the board yesterday discussed options to ward off currency speculators, the decision was not to take any action.

"We feel it's not necessary at this point," Buenaventura said.

"This is all temporary brought by extreme nervousness on an event that is not yet going to happen," he said.

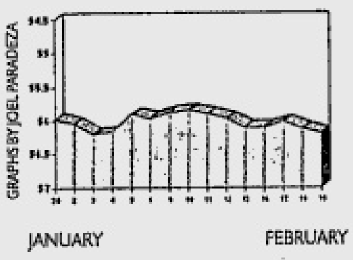
Some analysts expect that mass protests by

PESO/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱ 56.20 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 19, 2004

¥ 106.73 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 19, 2004

GOLD: $415.10-415.60
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 18, 2004

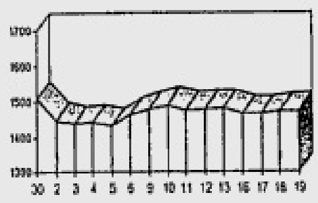
INTEREST RATES

February 19, 2004-MART1

Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 19-Feb-04	MART1 18-Feb-04
1 Month	6.7107	6.6917
3 Months	6.7868	6.7089
6 Months	7.9857	7.9617
1 Year	8.9321	8.925
2 Years	9.7661	9.7567
3 Years	10.6304	10.5783
4 Years	11.065	11.0193
5 Years	11.3336	11.2947
7 Years	11.5804	11.5767
10 Years	11.8696	11.85
20 Years	12.2215	12.2117
25 Years	12.4554	12.4583

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

Shares steady as market waits for FPJ ruling



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices closed little changed in cautious trade yesterday as investors waited for a Supreme Court ruling on whether movie star Fernando Poe Jr., the front-runner in the May presidential election, is eligible to stand, dealers said.

Police were out in force ahead of the Supreme Court hearing amid concerns that a ruling against FPJ could spark massive anti-government protests.

Even the release of figures showing that market-heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) more than tripled its net profit last year failed to stir much of a response as the market focused on FPJ.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 1.02 points or 0.07 percent to close at 1,473.14 after trading between 1,460.87 and 1,474.48.

Losers outnumbered gainers 27 to nine with 36 stocks unchanged.

Turnover fell to 242.7 million shares worth P1.13 billion from 251.8 million shares worth P1.53 billion Wednesday.

The all-shares index was down 7.38 points at 943.22. The commercial-industrial index fell 1.65 to 2,283.82 while property dropped 4.68 to 536.66. Mining lost 8.51 to 1,551.57 while oil was unchanged at 1.27. Banking and financial services advanced 5.23 to 434.82.

"Investors are sitting on the bench to await developments in the political arena," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities. *AFP*

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EO seen to ensure participation of local firms in gov't projects

By Michelle V. Remo

MALACAÑANG issued an executive order directing all government agencies to prioritize Filipino-owned construction and consultancy firms in the bidding of government construction and related projects.

The order followed complaints raised by local construction and consultancy firms that they were losing big government projects to foreign companies.

The Philippine Constructors Association and the Confederation of Filipino Consulting Organization said they had been experiencing difficulties in participating in government projects because of stiff requirements, such as huge capital that only foreign firms can afford.

In addition, government projects that are funded by foreign loans do not usually allow the participation of Filipino companies. Construction projects funded by official development assistance from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, for instance, normally allow only Japanese firms to participate in the bidding.

"The EO is intended to increase the participation of local constructors in ODA projects, because payment of these loans are shouldered by the government, anyway," said Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri in an interview.

EO No. 278, which was issued early this month, relaxed the requirements on bidders for government construction projects to allow more local companies to participate in the bidding.

For instance, a construction firm that has completed a previous project, whose cost is at least 50 percent of the value of the government contract being auctioned off, will be acceptable as a work experience requirement.

The EO also states that a government group tasked to negotiate with foreign lenders on loans intended for government projects should tap a representative from the private sector to ensure transparency. The Department of Finance, which heads government negotiating panel, should invite at least one representative recommended by the Construction Industry Association of the Philippines.

Neri, who is also director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said the executive order is intended to boost the local construction industry.

Neri said the construction industry experienced a 7 to 10-percent growth in private construction projects last year. The growth, however, was pulled down by a decline in government construction projects which was brought about by the budget deficit.

He said the executive order was expected to increase the industry's revenue from government construction projects.

Exchange sells another 3.6% stake

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) has agreed to sell 3.6 percent of its shares worth P66 million to a local holding company and a foreign investment fund, the bourse's underwriter confirmed yesterday.

Awaiting approval from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the sale completes the bourse's plan to transfer 40 percent of the PSE ownership to institutional investors, in "substantial compliance" to securities laws that put a cap of 20 percent on the size of ownership investors like brokers and financial institutions are allowed.

The balance of 60 percent is held by broker-shareholders.

Following a board meeting held Wednesday, the PSE said it would issue 199,254 new shares to A. Soriano Corp. (Anscor) and 350,738 of new and secondary shares to Equinox Partners, PSE's underwriter ATR Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc. said.

The shares will be issued at P119.50 each, the same price at which five local funds had subscribed to 36.4 percent or 5.2 million PSE shares earlier. These funds which also agreed to buy additional 295,603 shares were state pension fund Government Service Insurance System, private funds Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Beneficial Trust Fund, San Miguel Corp. Retirement Fund, Kim Eng Investment Ltd., and KE Strategic Pte Ltd.

Once the listing of additional shares amounting to 812,095 to be held by these institutions, the holdings of each investor would be as follow: 9.1 percent each for PLDT Beneficial Trust, SMC Retirement Plan and GSIS ; 4.55 percent each for KE Strategic and Kim Eng; 1.3 percent for Anscor and 2.3 percent for Equinox Partners.

Anscor has diversified interests that include power generation, aviation, tourism and real estate. It also holds investments in International Container Terminal Services Inc., which provides container port services and Phelps Dodge Philippines Inc., which manufactures wire and cable products.

Equinox Partners, for its part, has offices in New York , Chicago, Washington, London, Paris and Munich and offers consulting services on real estate

Manila Water raises capital stock to ₱4B

THE AYALA Group and its partners subscribed to some P500 million worth of redeemable preferred shares of Manila Water Company Inc. (MWCI).

This developed after the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) allowed the company to expand its capital from P2 billion to P4 billion through increases in its common and preferred shares.

Ayala Corp., its partner United Utilities Pacific Holdings BV and investment company BPI Capital Corp. subscribed to a total of P500 million worth of MWC redeemable preferred shares.

To complete the capital build-up plan, P1.5 billion worth of common shares were issued. This, officials said, was in preparation to the planned Initial Public Offering of the company scheduled for next year.

Preferred shareholders get the first crack at a portion of the company's retained earnings or dividends before they are paid out to common shareholders.

Of the P500 million subscription, Ayala Corp. accounted for P310 million; United Capital, P120.69 million, and BPI Capital, P68.97 million.

The Ayala group earlier bought the shares of Bechtel Utilities Inc. in Manila Water expanding its stake in the water utility to 60 percent.

Ayala Corp. and BPI Capital bought out MWCI's foreign partner after Bechtel indicated that it wanted to divest.

United Utilities, bought 2 percent of Bechtel's shares, beefing up its equity to 18.2 percent. The employees group increased its stake from 6 to 7 percent while Japan's Mitsubishi Corp. maintained its 10-percent equity.

MWCI, which supplies water to half or some 5 million customers in Metro Manila, accounts for 10 percent of the group's income.

FPI opposes hike in IOU tax

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE FEDERATION of Philippine Industries yesterday decried Congress' approval of a bill that jacked up the documentary stamp tax (DST) on debt instruments by as much as 233 percent.

FPI president Jesus Arranza said the proposed law was a burden to businesses and consumers, who depend on loans to fund their activities.

The bill, entitled "An Act Rationalizing the Provisions on the Documentary Stamp Tax of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997..." is awaiting President Macapagal-Arroyo's signature to become law.

In a letter dated Feb. 5, Arranza asked the President to veto Section 179 of the bill, saying it would drive up costs of borrowing and make industries uncompetitive.

Section 179 of the bill provided for an increase on the DST on debt instruments of more than 110 days, he said.

"Loans with a maturity of one year will pay P1 per P200 from the current P0.30 per P200, an increase of 233 percent," Arranza said.

"It is unfortunate that we were not (invited) to any congressional hearing on this measure. Nevertheless, we did express our objection to members of the Senate—including the Senate ways and means committee—before they met in the bicameral committee," he added.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 19, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	23,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44	45	44	45	167,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38	39	38	39	504,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.57	180,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	26.5	26	26	104,100
Security Bank Corp.	16.5	17.25	16.5	17.25	5,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2020	2025	2020	2025	740
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	200,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	134	153	134	153	26,720
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1510	1500	1510	670
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	28,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	1,330,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	865	880	860	880	20,450
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	4,100,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.68	1.72	1.62	1.66	22,606,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	26,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	945	945	930	935	271,750
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	5,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19	19.25	19	19.25	1,900
Manila Electric Co. B	31	31.5	30.5	31	634,100
Petron Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	1,754,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	30,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	3,110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	50,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.12	1.22	1.12	1.22	1,267,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	235,200
RFM Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	60,000
San Miguel Corp. A	55.5	56	55.5	56	284,600
San Miguel Corp. B	68.5	69	68.5	69	111,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.20	0.26	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6	6	2,448,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.024	0.021	0.023	2,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	110,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	2,840,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	320,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23	23.25	23	23.25	188,400
Ionics Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	1,400,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	6,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,247,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	990,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.23	0.27	70,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	6,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.48	170,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.25	191,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series I	10	10	10	10	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	2,085,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.21	4,960,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	2,390,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	230,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	145,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	115,245,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	890,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	620,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.007	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	48,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	40,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	180,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	11,000,000

Peso falters . . .

From page B1

supporters of FPJ—who is facing disqualification from the May presidential race on citizenship questions—may erupt into an uprising similar to Edsa-3.

But Buenaventura said the BSP was unfazed, especially noting the relatively small volume at the spot foreign exchange market of $95.5 million.

"It has nothing to do with fundamentals," he said. "Let them (traders) take their dollar positions now."

The BSP chief maintained, however, that the institution was not running out of options and would be ready to exercise these when necessary.

DISCLOSURES

THE PHILODRILL Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 23 with March 26 as record date.

* * *

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange appointed Aissa Encarnacion as corporate secretary. Also, a P16 per share cash dividend was declared in favor of stockholders of record as of March 4. It is payable on March 9.

* * *

BANK of the Philippine Islands declared a 20-percent stock dividend on its total issued and outstanding common shares.

* * *

MANILA Jockey Club Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 26 with March 15 as record date.

* * *

TRANS-OIL and Energy Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 2, 3 p.m. at the Ballroom 1 of Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 3 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

HONORIO Reyes Lao retired as senior vice president of **China Banking Corp.** Samuel Chiong was promoted from first vice president to SVP.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Company will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 8 at 4 p.m. Stockholders of record as of April 9 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. The following cash dividends for the company's various convertible preferred stocks were declared: $1.029412 per share of Series III, P4.675 per share of Series V, $0.09925 per share of Series VI and Y10.179725 per share of Series VII. All dividends are in favor of stockholders of record as of March 17 and will be payable on April 15.

* * *

JOSIE Uy, Melita Tan and Juanita Chua were all designated vice president of the Manila branch of **Cityland Development Corp.** and **City & Land Developers Inc.** ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 19, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.788208	1.000000	56.0640
Japan	Yen	0.007389	0.009374	0.5255
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487980	1.887800	105.8376
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101436	0.128962	7.2150
Switzerland	Franc	0.634526	0.814863	45.1328
Canada	Dollar	0.595684	0.805023	42.3700
Singapore	Dollar	0.469172	0.596238	33.3714
Australia	Dollar	0.624868	0.792770	44.4459
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.090794	2.652590	148.7148
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210189	0.266667	14.9504
Brunei	Dollar	0.467780	0.593472	33.2724
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000094	0.000119	0.0067
Thailand	Baht	0.020216	0.025648	1.4379
UAE	Dirham	0.214601	0.272264	15.2642
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.268700	71.1284
Argentina	Peso	0.268555	0.340716	19.1019
Brazil	Real	0.268555	0.340716	19.1019
Denmark	Kroner	0.134207	0.170268	9.5459
India	Rupee	0.017446	0.022134	1.2409
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207445	0.263186	14.7553
Mexico	New Peso	0.071747	0.091025	5.1032
New Zealand	Dollar	0.555311	0.704523	39.4984
Norway	Kroner	0.113614	0.144142	8.0812
Pakistan	Kroner	0.013780	0.017483	0.9802
South Africa	Kroner	0.120154	0.152439	8.5463
Korea	Won	0.000684	0.000868	0.0487
Sweden	Kroner	0.108972	0.138253	7.7510
Syria	Pound	0.017922	0.022738	1.2748
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023871	0.030285	1.6979
Venezuela	Kroner	0.000411	0.000522	0.0293

FPJ advisers: Weak peso, more globalization

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

EXPECT a weaker peso, faster privatization, and an expanded globalization program should Fernando Poe Jr. win the presidency and heed the advice of his leading economic advisers.

Almost to a man (no woman listed), the 19 (reduced to 18, with Ponciano Intal Jr.'s denial) pro-FPJ academicians are committed free traders who have built their professional reputations and credentials churning out papers calling for the dismantling of protective barriers/tariffs and crony capitalism, and the promotion of greater transparency and governance in the public sector.

Bernardo Villegas, the more senior of the group, especially railed against, and consequently locally popularized the term "crony capitalism," in the waning years of Marcos rule.

The Opus Dei economist, whose last published work was a textbook praising the Erap economic policies (book project funded by Erap contributor William Gatchalian), now serves as a nominee of the family of Kokoy Romualdez in the board of Benguet Corp.

(A brother, UP Manila Prof. Ed Villegas, happens to be a consultant of the communist National Democratic Front. Who cancels out the sins of whom depends on which side of the political fence you are on.)

Bernardo Villegas and the more senior of the group happen to be leading members of the Foundation for Economic Freedom, whose advocates have transcended political differences serving in the Marcos, Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and GMA Cabinets.

Among the FEF's latest crusade, in partnership with their USAID-funded colleagues, is the opening of Philippine skies to foreign carriers and the privatization of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Like many NGOs, the economic advisers have mastered the art of tapping the many faucets of foreign funds and foreign training to pursue their advocacies.

Raul Fabella is best remembered in the Bangko Sentral for obtaining USAID money to write a paper and lobby for the devaluation of the peso in the mid-90s. Intal, incidentally, who is also a weak peso advocate, is a director of Sun Life Canada Dollar Fund.

Fabella is also the vice president of Procurement Watch, which last received from the World Bank $122,851.42 to fund public advocacy campaign to make government bidding procedures more transparent.

Similarly, FPJ's La Salle-based head of governance policy team, Francisco Magno, is a key member of Asia Foundation-funded Transparency and Accountability Network. Asia Foundation, in turn, disclosed that the TAN project is also funded by the US Agency for International Development.

Magno's La Salle colleague, Julio Teehankee, was a recent recipient of a travel/study grant from the US State Department, and UP team member Joel Mangahas, who said he had been won to the FPJ camp because the actor, among other attributes, "arrived on time," traveled to Indonesia through an ADB grant for local governance project.

Governance gravy

NOT only is preaching corporate governance food for the soul, the advocacy is also good to the pocket.

Aquino-era Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao received $66,858.20 from the World Bank to conduct good governance seminars in a span of two years, on top of another $163,618.83 given by the World Bank to his group, Institute of Corporate Directors.

Noting Estanislao's success and savviness, the Australian Agency for International Development last month showered another P11.1 million to the Institute of Corporate Directors to continue the apostolate.

Even the advertising agencies have caught on the academe's game.

Campaigns and Grey, for instance, bagged a $25,355.98-contract from the World Bank during the height of the Erap impeachment campaign for a project called "Improving Governance and Reducing Corruption."

At about the same time, our award-winning colleagues at the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism also received from the World Bank $36,723.92 to pursue anti-corruption stories, among other assignments.

(Note to readers: Cocktales is publicly asking his editors leave to similarly seek funding from outside sources, with the proper disclosures attached to the particular future columns like, "This column is brought to you by taipan X , corporate Y, or multilateral Z.")

Internet talk

- THE UP Film Institute is by far the worst local spammer, daily clogging the mailbox of its target list with unwanted e-mails despite vigilant reporting to the webmaster.
- TRI-ISYS, a Binondo-based Internet service provider that has aggressively marketed its P680/month unlimited usage, has become hopelessly clogged; it is now impossible to get through the dial-up network even at 10:30 p.m.

Heard through the grapevine

THE leaders of the UP sorority group Sigma Delta Phi are suing each other for a still unaccounted P1-million fund.

(E-mail: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

PRULINK	PRU LIFE U.K.	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week February 17, 2004	Last Week February 10, 2004
Bond Fund - Peso	1.12045	1.11940
Managed Fund - Peso	1.16936	1.17180
Bond Fund - US Dollar	0.9847	0.9943

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

Maynilad names Estuar president

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER a four-year stint at the beleaguered Maynilad Water Services Inc., former Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan III has given way to another former Cabinet member to man the helm of the water concessionaire.

Former Public Works Secretary Fiorello Estuar took over Alunan's post as president of Maynilad, following his three-year presidency at Lopez-owned construction firm First Balfour Beatty Inc.

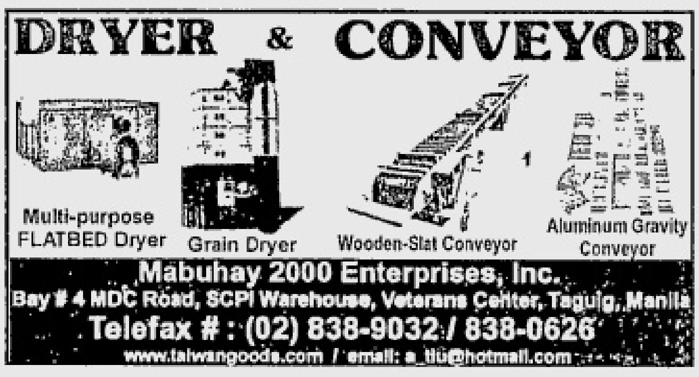
Oscar Lopez, chair of Maynilad parent firm Benpres Holdings Corp., said Alunan could be better used in Lopez-led firms other than the cash-strapped water concessionaire serving the West Zone of Metro Manila and Cavite.

"The Lopez Group would like to maximize the benefit of the experience of Alunan, particularly in political and security concerns," he said in a statement yesterday.

Alunan will retain his post as president of First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. as well as his directorships in various Lopez-owned infrastructure-related businesses. He will also go back to being a consultant to the Lopez Group.

On the other hand, with his assumption of the Maynilad presidency, Estuar is expected to "assure the continued provision of adequate service to the millions of people dependent on the water services of Maynilad simultaneous with its financial rehabilitation."

Maynilad is currently undergoing financial rehabilitation, following the decision late last year of the Paris-based International Court of Arbitration for it to pay more than P6 billion in concession fees to the MWSS.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ASIA OCEANIA STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE
MANILA

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FEBRUARY 18 - 19, 2004
STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE
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IBSA Mission

To promote and foster sports for the blind and visually impaired, either directly or indirectly, through the authorities of all the nations, the homogenisation of the bodies or entities responsible for this area and the legal treatment that should be afforded to them.

To maintain close cooperation with all organisations that work in the blind and visually impaired sector, as well as with all others which pursue similar or analogous goals.

To promote sports for the blind and visually impaired, either directly or indirectly, through any of the legally-permitted channels.

To structure and regulate sports for the blind and visually impaired at international level, as well as to plan, coordinate and organise competitions and sporting events for the blind or visually impaired at national, continental and world level.

To promote the holding of meetings, seminars, conferences and, in short, whatever socio-cultural events might prove necessary in order to raise awareness of the relevance of sports practice for blind and visually impaired persons as the optimum means of achieving their best possible integration.

IBSA OFFICERS

Enrique Pérez *PRESIDENT* Oral Miller *VICE PRESIDENT* Alberto Martins da Costa *TECHNICAL DIRECTOR* Silvia Aldini *TREASURER* Alberto Bravo Agudo *SECRETARY GENERAL*
Georges Challe *MEDICAL DIRECTOR* Ilona Meleunova *Member at Large* Launel Scott *Member at Large* David Farias Costa *Member at Large* Vladimir Vchistev *Member at Large*
Kannarath Meystre *Continental Delegate (EUROPE)* Vital Severino Neto *Continental Delegate (AMERICA)* Jean Benoit Reynolds Permal *Continental Delegate (AFRICA)*
Michael Barredo *Continental Delegate (ASIA)* Ray Mc Leod *Continental Delegate (OCEANIA)*

ONCE NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE SPANISH BLIND
INQUIRER
PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE
Casino Filipino
TEAM VENTURES

MESSAGES

On behalf of IBSA, the International Blind Sports Federation, it is my pleasure to welcome all participants in the **IBSA ASIA-OCEANIA STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE** to the city of Manila

Our federation is well-aware of the potential for sports development in Asia and Oceania, the importance given to developing sports and the crucial role both continents play in the organisation and practise of sports. The success of recent sports events such as the FESPIC Games, the Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing and the 2002 FIFA World Cup in Korea and Japan, together with future events like the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing, demonstrate the leading role of Asia and Oceania in the world of sports

Blind sport continues to grow, with new sports on the Paralympic programme and an ever-larger number of blind athletes world-wide. As a result, it is our duty to develop our sports further in Asia and Oceania. This first conference is aimed at sharing information, analysing strategies and creating programmes and initiatives to continue improving the opportunities to practise sport offered to the blind in this part of the world. In short, the conference has as its ultimate goal the enhancement of the personal autonomy and independence of people with a visual disability, qualities which physical activity undoubtedly helps to develop and boost.

On behalf of IBSA and the IBSA Management Committee I would like to thank the conference organisers and express my gratitude to all participants for attending. In conclusion, allow me to reiterate IBSA's wish to continue supporting Asia and Oceania in your efforts to develop blind sports to the maximum

ENRIQUE PEREZ
IBSA President

Greetings to the men and women of the International Blind Sports Federation and the Philippine Sports Commission!

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the organizers of the first ever **IBSA Asia-Oceania Strategic Planning Conference** and the **IBSA Management Committee Meeting** here in the Philippines. I commend your efforts in continuing to develop further the capabilities of visually impaired persons through sports. As we all know, the exchange of knowledge and information is key in elevating the level of awareness of the people and in increasing the number of opportunities where blind persons can excel

I would like to thank Commissioner Michael Barredo and his team for making this event possible. Indeed, this truly remarkable collaboration fosters unity and cooperation among blind persons and organizations. On behalf of my colleagues at the Department of Social Welfare and Development, I would like to congratulate you for this noteworthy achievement

I wish you the best of luck and more power in all your endeavors!

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
Secretary, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)

My warmest greetings and congratulations to all delegates and participants attending the Conference of the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA).

In behalf of the Philippine Sports Commission, I wish to congratulate the organizers and member-countries of the IBSA for making great efforts in participating in this Conference.

Indeed, the PSC is proud and thankful that the IBSA has successfully staged this prestigious event which provides an effective forum for the differently-abled sector to discuss relevant issues affecting their sector.

This gathering, the PSC believes, will further promote openness and transparency in dissecting current trends and laying out plans of actions for the complete participation of the differently abled sector in the field of sports.

We are hopeful that this Conference will once more put the very visions and thrusts of IBSA to new greater heights towards the full encouragement and development of the differently-abled sector

Again, congratulations to all of you!

ERIC R. BUHAIN
Chairman, Philippine Sports Commission (PSC)

On behalf of IBSA Asia and the organizers of this event, we would like to welcome and express our heartfelt appreciation to the participants to this Strategic Planning Conference. The conference shall serve as a venue to strengthen relationships and cooperation among existing member organizations as well as encourage other countries to be part of IBSA's vision of providing visually impaired persons an opportunity to enhance their lives through sport

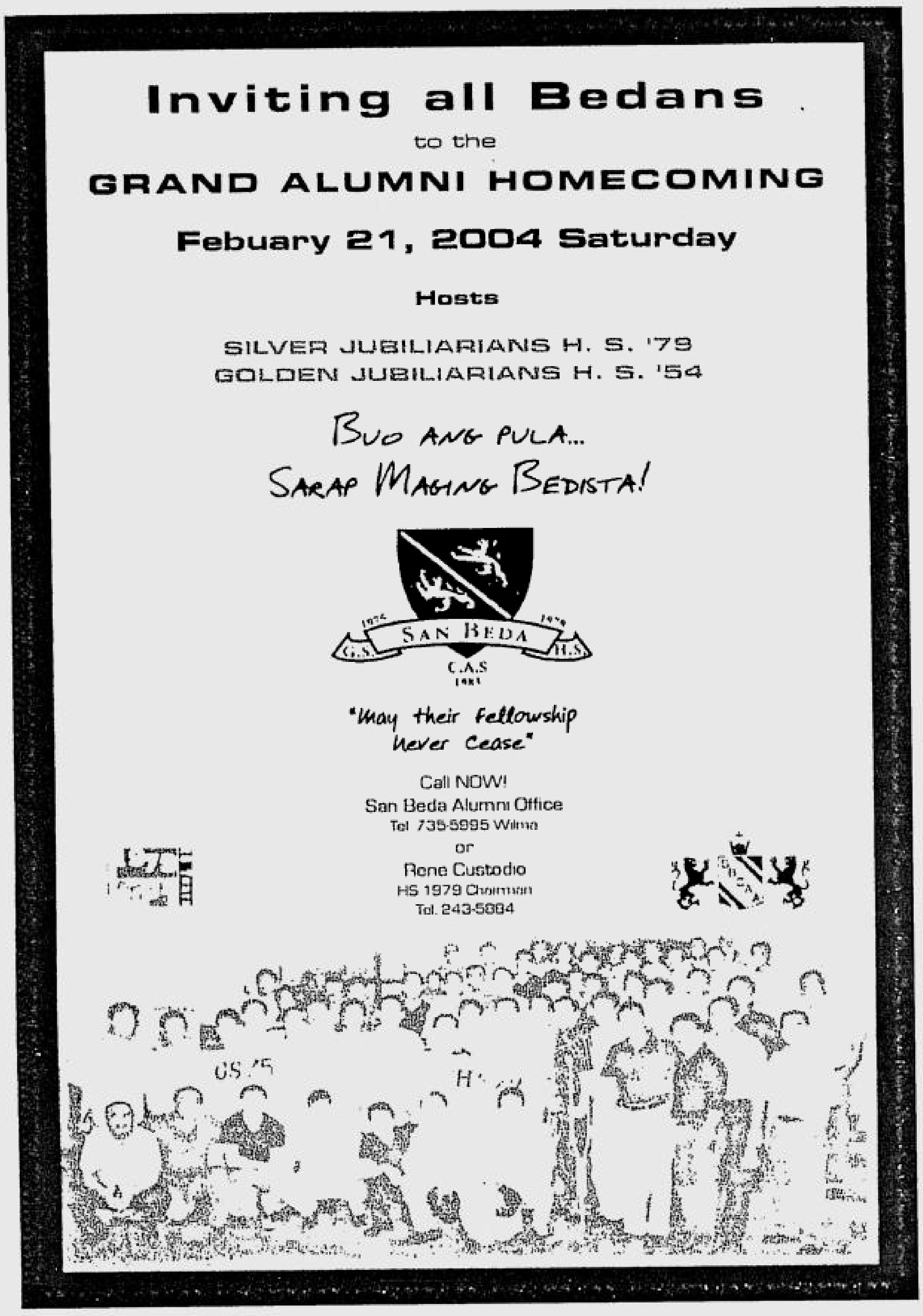
We also aim to achieve our objective of further advancing blind sports in Asia and Oceania, raising the blind athletes' level of performance and increasing their participation in various upcoming competitions such as the 2005 Asean Para Games in Manila, the 2006 FESPIC Games in Malaysia and the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing, China

Moreover, this event also reaffirms the Philippine government and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's continuing commitment in promoting its program of *Sports for All*, particularly in the sector for persons with disabilities.

We thank you for a productive gathering and the eventual fruition of our goals. *One Asia, One Mission, One Vision, One Hope*

Mabuhay!

MICHAEL I. BARREDO
IBSA Continental Delegate for Asia



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Overexploitation, poverty in fisheries

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

WE often hear about overexploitation of forestry by unscrupulous loggers. This has even resulted in widely publicized deaths. An example is those who died during the recent flood in Leyte, the root cause being deforestation.

We do not, however, hear about the unpublicized deaths that occur from extreme poverty in coastal areas. It is in these areas that the highest level of poverty incidence in our country is found. These deaths are largely the result of overexploitation of our municipal waters, which has deprived the small fishers of their livelihood. overexploitation has often been caused by unscrupulous big commercial fishers.

Background

On June 1, 2003, Fr. Emmanuel Alparce reported on illegal commercial fishing operations in the municipal waters of Donsol and Pilar, Sorsogon. This was because of the inaction of local government officials and the collusion between illegal fishing operators and law enforcers.

Reacting to this, James Escober Jr., then the head of the Sorsogon field office for the Tambuyog Development Center, said, "I personally know many of the public officials, and I know from experience how difficult it is to make them act against illegal fishing." He said that for these officials, responsible coastal resource management alienates the illegal fishing operators who corrupt them with large financial contributions.

Small fisher priority

In the law, preferential rights in municipal waters are given to small over commercial fishers. This accomplishes two objectives: the preservation of fishery resources, and provision of opportunity for small fishers to earn.

The preferential treatment for small fishers is enshrined in the 1987 Constitution, the Local Government Code and the Fisheries Code. However, this is not a reality today. As a result, the fishery overexploitation and the extreme poverty in the coastal areas continue. Two solutions are proposed.

Municipal waters

The first solution is to restore DAO 17, suspended last March 17, 2003, which delineates and delimits municipal waters within 15 kilometers of the shoreline. In these waters, priority is given to small over commercial fishers. While there was a partial DAO 17 restoration last Jan. 14, 2004 by the Department of Agriculture (DA), this covered only 614 municipalities without offshore islands. For the offshore islands of the remaining 301 municipalities, overexploitation will continue.

People power

The second solution is to effectively implement the people power provision in the 1998 Fisheries Code. This will serve proactively in providing valuable input for responsible mayors in coastal resource management, and defensively as a check and balance mechanism for the unscrupulous ones.

The code provides for the creation of Fishery and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (FARMCs). However, in several cases, these FARMCs become useless since they are ignored by the mayor, who is the key factor in coastal resource management.

In the case of Sorsogon, Escober pointed out that of the 15 municipal FARMCs created, only four were still functioning. He said, "Many municipal FARMCs never went beyond the first meeting."

Structural defect

The structural defect is that the FARMC is not represented in the Municipal Development Council (MDC), which formulates and implements the yearly municipal development plans and budgets. Consequently, many mayors never meet the FARMC and conveniently forget the fishery sector needs.

There is a recommendation that the Local Autonomy Code be amended to include the FARMC as part of the Municipal Development Councils in the coastal areas. Mayor Ramon Guico, president of the League of Municipalities, favors this amendment. He goes further and suggests that this MDC membership also be given to the Municipal Agriculture and Fishery Councils.

But amendments such as these take years to happen. In the meantime, given the continuing fishery overexploitation and the fishers' ex-

OVER/ B5

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RP imports rose by 14.8% in Dec. '03 to $3.07B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S imports rose by 14.8 percent in December last year and by 5.7 percent for the full year, raising hopes that businesses are expanding.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) reported yesterday that December imports increased to $3.068 billion from $2.673 billion in the same period in 2002, bringing 2003 imports to $37.448 billion from $35.427 billion the previous year.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the growth in imports indicated that businesses are expanding as the bulk of the country's imports are in the form of capital equipment or raw materials for exports.

Neri said the rise in December imports was expected to lead to a better economic performance this year, particularly in the agriculture, construction and information technology sectors.

Electronics products were the top imports in December, accounting for almost half of the total import bill at $1.497 billion.

Following electronics were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials, accounting for a 9.3 percent share of the import bill.

Next on the list are industrial machinery and equipment, iron and steel, transport equipment, textile and related products, telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, plastics, animal feed and cereals.

The country's biggest source of imports for December was Japan, accounting for 21.5 percent of the total import bill, followed by Singapore, Republic of Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Thailand.

Neri said the increase in animal feed imports meant that the agriculture sector was augmenting production.

He said the government's recent decision to allow a one-time duty-free importation of corn was intended to address the scarcity of domestic supply and to support the sector.

On the increase in electronics imports, Neri said the industry was geared toward increasing its exports this year.

"This indicates that semiconductor exports are gaining ground following the worldwide recovery of the sector," said Neri.

The electronics industry plans to grow by at least 5 percent this year.

Neri also announced that Intel and Texas Instruments are set to invest up to $100 million each this year to upgrade their production facilities.

DTI to probe US action on 300 RP export items

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry yesterday said it would probe reports that some 300 food products from 170 exporters were barred entry to the United States last year.

Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima said in a statement that trade and agriculture officials would meet with food exporters as well as traders to check the veracity of these reports.

Assuming that the "alarming" reports were true, Purisima said marketing companies or the so-called consolidators could be responsible for the problem.

"Some of these products, which are (intended) for the local market, were shipped without the knowledge of the manufacturers," he said.

He added that it was also possible that the traders did not provide the documents showing how these products were made, prompting US ports to reject the shipments.

"The (DTI) is strongly promoting food as one of our major export products. If the reports are true, the problem must be resolved at once since integrity of the products is at stake," Purisima said.

Fresh and processed food products are the country's second top export.

DTI data showed that from January to November 2003, the country exported about $1.05 billion worth of food products, a 16.5-percent increase from $898.04 million posted in the same period the previous year.

Japan, Singapore eye RP chicken

DAVAO CITY—Japan and Singapore, two of the region's biggest markets for dressed and processed chicken, are looking into the possibility of importing chicken from the Philippines.

Dr. Ronello Abila, chief of the Animal Health Division of the Bureau of Animal and Industry in Manila, said his office has been receiving a number of inquiries as the Philippines has remained largely free of the bird flu virus sweeping other Asian countries.

"Japan indicated 30,000 metric tons as the initial demand for dressed and processed chicken," he said.

Japan imports about 300 million kilograms of chicken a year. More than 60 percent of the supply comes from China and Thailand, two of the countries affected by bird flu.

Abila said government agencies recently came up with a four-point plan to prevent and, if necessary, contain bird flu.

The first provision is to implement stricter quarantine measures and ban chicken imports from infected countries.

The government will likewise strengthen its monitoring and surveillance of poultry farms, game fowl and migratory birds.

Another provision is to strengthen the coordination between local government units to ensure a quick response in dealing with suspected cases of bird flu.

Abila said another important aspect of the four-point plan is the implementation of a public awareness campaign.

If there are confirmed cases of bird flu, Abila said the DA will automatically get rid of the infected chicken using poisonous gas or carbon monoxide.

He said the DA will also seal off the affected farm. *Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Over exploitation ...

From page B4

treme poverty, immediate action must be taken.

Interim solution

The Local Government Code mandates that 25 percent of the MDC shall be composed of representatives from people organizations (POs) and nongovernment organizations (NGOs). The FARMC is neither a PO nor an NGO. Therefore, it cannot be a part of the MDC.

However, the FARMC can nominate one of their PO or NGO members to be in the MDC. Unlike the other POs and NGOs who have to jockey for the limited MDC positions, the FARMC-nominated representative will be given automatic MDC membership and not be subjected to political pressures. The FARMC will then be a key factor in formulating and monitoring both the plans and budgets of the municipality itself. It will also be able to monitor the plans and budgets of government agencies that are operating in that municipality's fishery sector. This is not happening today, especially where budgets are concerned. The absence of private sector monitoring in areas like this is a major reason why corruption continues undetected.

Conclusion

Mayor Guico has agreed to the Alyansa Agrikultura proposal of including two items in the March executive committee meeting agenda of the League of Municipalities: (1) the DAO 17 restoration in the 301 municipalities with offshore islands; and (2) the interim arrangement of having a FARMC-nominated representative as part of the Municipal Development Council. We look forward to the mayors' support for these two proposals. For they are key to stopping fishery overexploitation and small fishers' extreme poverty in our country today.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry and former chair and Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

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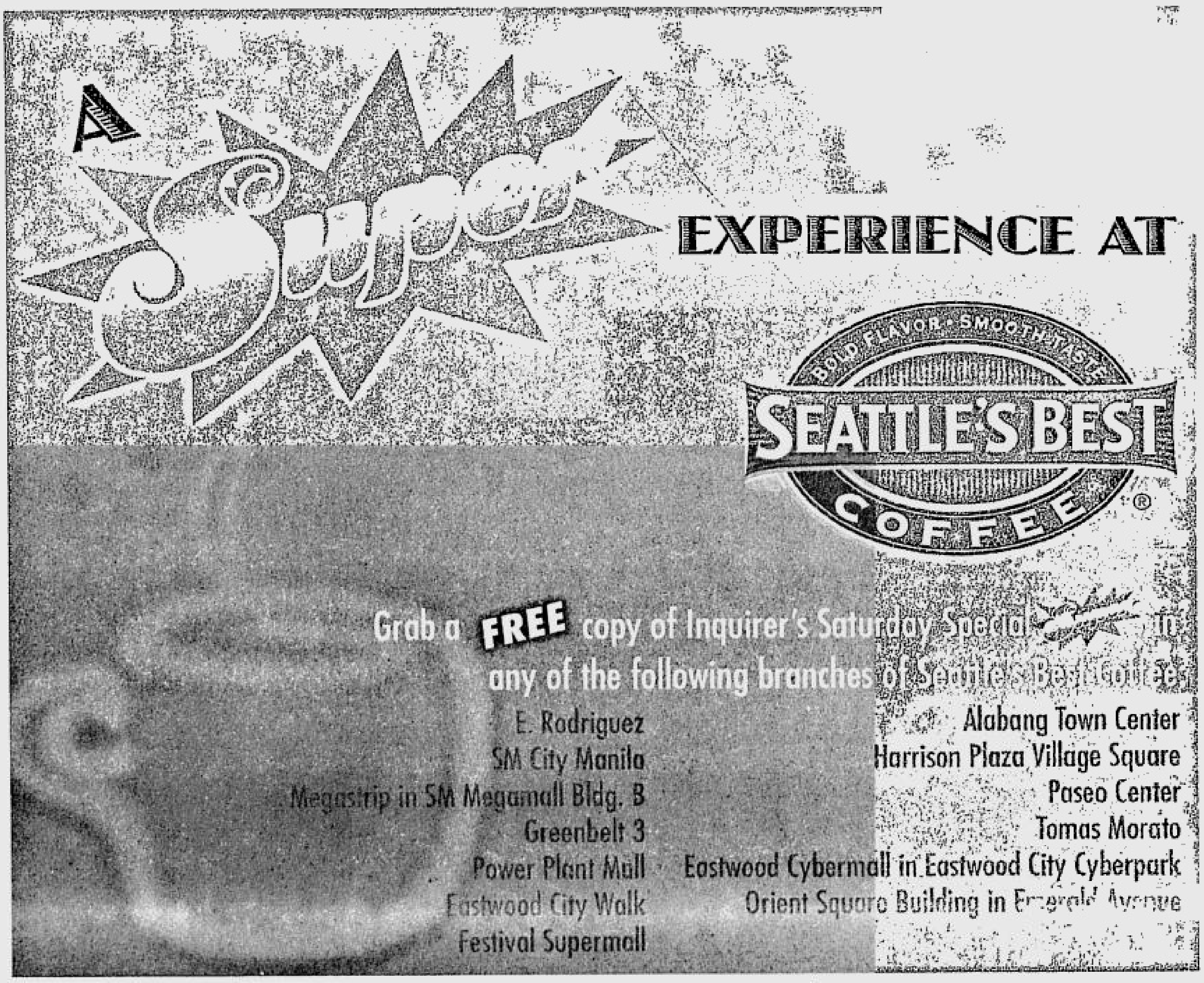

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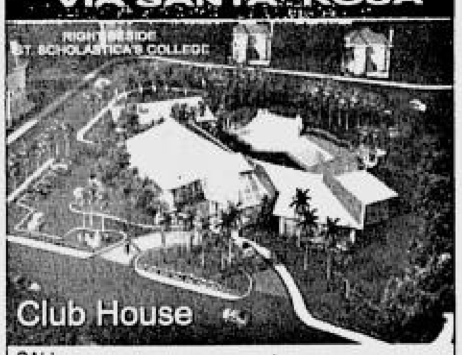

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Immigration Consultant

CATHERINE SAS
Barrister and Solicitor

Ms. Catherine Sas will be coming to Manila for consultations regarding immigration to Canada on Friday, March 5 and Saturday, March 6, 2004. To book your consultation appointment, please call Mr. Reny de los Reyes at (02)-821-5030 or (02)-776-5227.
Ms. Sas will be meeting with clients in Manila at the Business Centre of the Intercontinental Hotel in Makati.

CONSULTATION FEE: Php 1,000.00

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Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City
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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Meralco Stock Cert. 285600A under the name Gregorio C. Arueb Jr. was lost. If no contact is receive new certificate will be issued. (PDI-Feb. 13, 20 & 27, 2004)

LEGAL NOTICE

Deed of Adjudication

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Mila Alano-Bonites consisting of one-half share in Unit P-3 of the Garden Heights situated at E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City was adjudicated equally among her heirs Cecilio Bonites and Schienalyn Bonites as per deed entered as Doc. No. 3673; Page No. 18; Book No. LXIIX; Series of 2003 in the Notarial Register of Atty. Antonio A. Bisnar of Roxas City
(PII-Feb.13,20&27,2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANTONIO DE ROSARIO MACARANAS has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc 212, Page 043, Book XII, Series of 2003 before Notary Public Atty. Avelino B. Macaraeg of Quezon City
(PDI-Feb. 20, 27 & Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late BERNARDINO V. ABARIENTOS and EUGENIA C. ABARIENTOS was extrajudicially settle among their heirs as per Doc. No. 46 5 Page No. 94 Book No. II Series of 2004 as per Notary Public Atty. Mariano U. Palisoc of Makati City
(PDI-Feb. 20,27, Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Sps. Leonardo B. Reyes and Emerenciana G. Reyes was extrajudicially settled among their heirs per Doc. 6 Page 2 Book XVII Series of 2004 before notary public Pacifico A. Tunac of Quezon City
(PDI-Feb. 20, 27 & Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Zolli Lalucia was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc No. 604; Page No. 61; Book No. XV, Series of 2004 as per Notary Public Atty. Dante M. Cortina
(PDI-Feb. 13, 20 & 27, 2004)

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For details and information pls. contact the PSTD Secretariat:
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E-mail: jpstd2k@yahoo.com
Look for Doris, Marissa or Fred

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E-MAIL: pparo7@cvis.net.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Ports Authority through the Port District of Visayas invites interested bidders to submit Application to apply for eligibility, and subsequently to bid, if pre-qualified for the:

I.

A. Name of project : REMOVAL OF TRANSIT SHED AND IIMPROVEMENT OF STORAGE AREA PORT OF TACLOBAN, TACLOBAN CITY

B. Scope of Work :

I	Demolition of Port Police Bldg. & Fence	Minor	VI	Demolition of Engineering Bodega	Minor
II	Demolition of Concrete Pavement (133.20 cu.m.)	Minor	VII	Demolition of Various Trees (19.0 units)	Minor
III	Demolition of 12m x 42m Transit Shed 1	Minor	VIII	Concreting of Storage Area, 1800 sq.m.	Major
IV	Demolition of 12m x 30m Transit Shed 2	Minor	IX	Demolition of Passenger Terminal Bldg.	Minor
V	(non-women) water separator (12,380.0 sq.m.)	Minor			

C. Minimum Equipment Requirements:

1.0	1 unit	Air Compressor 250-300 cfm	Owned	7.0	1 unit	Pneumatic Jackhammer	Owned
				8.0	1 unit	Payloader, 3 cu.m. Cap	Owned/Leased
2.0	1 unit	Concrete Cutter	Owned	9.0	1 unit	Power Chain Saw	Owned
3.0	2 units	Concrete Mixer, one bagger	Owned	10.0	1 unit	Road Grader, 135 Hp cap.	Owned/Leased
4.0	2 units	Concrete Vibratorr	Owned	11.0	1 unit	Road Roller with Compactor, 35T cap.	Owned/Leased
5.0	2 units	Cutting Outfits	Owned	12.0	1 unit	Transit Mixer, 3 cu.m. cap (min)	Owned/Leased
6.0	2 units	Dump Truck, 10 cu.m. cap	Owned	13.0	1 unit	Truck Mounted Crane, 25 tons capacity	Owned/Leased

D. Budget for the Contract : P 10,164,400.00
Source of Funding : PPA Corporate Fund
Contract Duration : 168 Calendar Days

E. Required PCAB Registration & Classification : Medium "A" Road & Highway Pavement

Bid Documents shall be issued only to eligible licensed contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents of Ph. 2,000.00.

F. Experience:
Similar in nature and complexity with at least 50% of the approved budget for the Contract to be bid and 50% of the major items of work

G. Cost of Pre-qualification or Eligibility Form : P 200.00
Place of Issuance : Philippine Ports Authority
Port District - Visayas
BAC Secretariat
CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area
Cebu City

H. Last day of Issuance of Pre-C Forms : March 01, 2004

I. Deadline of Submission of Accomplished Pre-C/Eligibility Forms : March 08, 2004

Only contractors classified and registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) on Contractor's License and Registration Particulars will be issued Eligibility Forms. The Forms are available at the BAC Secretariat, CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Boulevard, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. Interested applicants are required to bring a letter of intent and original copy of Contractor's valid PCAB License for verification/authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to the pre-qualification, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the RA 9184.

Further information may be obtained from the following:
BAC Secretariat : Tel. No. (032) 232-3401
PPA Website : www.ppa.com.ph
www.cvis.net.ph/ppa

The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any informality in the proposals received and to accept such bid most advantageous to the Philippine Ports Authority.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL T. GORME**
Port District Manager

(PDI--February 13 & 20, 2004)

EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE WITH ADJUDICATION

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late CASTOR LAVARIAS and FELOMINA ESCORPIZO, consisting of two (2) parcels of agricultural land, namely: Lot 1045-C-2 and Lot No. 1045-C-5, both Psd-02-058145, and portions of Lot 1045-C (LRC) Psd-146750, containing an area of 40,000 sq.m. each, covered by TCT Nos. T-300199 and T-300200, respectively, both situated in the Barrio of Nabbuan, City of Santiago, Isabela, are the subject of an Extra-Judicial Settlement of Estate with Adjudication executed by their heirs before Notary Public Eladio C. Velasco, of Asingan, Pangasinan per Doc. # 479 Page # 96 Book # II Series of 2003.

(PDI – Feb. 6, 13 & 20, 2004)

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FOR SELLING COUNTERFEIT GARMENT PRODUCTS BEARING THE CHARACTERS AND TRADEMARKS OF *THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP*

We, **BENITO ONG** and **DONATA D. ABISTADO**, co-proprietors of **AYA GARMENTS INDUSTRIES / AYA GARMENTS**, hereby unreservedly apologize to **THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP**, for selling counterfeit garment products bearing, without authority from **THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP**, its world famous characters and trademarks, such as **THE POWERPUFF GIRLS, DEXTER'S LABORATORY**, and **JOHNNY BRAVO**. By doing so, we have contravened the Intellectual Property Code (Republic Act No. 8293) and infringed upon the trademarks and copyrights of the **THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP**.

We recognize that under Philippine laws it is a violation of another's trademarks or copyrights to manufacture, sell, offer to sell, and/or distribute products bearing unauthorized reproductions of such trademarks or copyrights. Furthermore, the Intellectual Property Code provides that *Trademark Infringement and/or Unfair Competition* is punishable by imprisonment terms from 2 to 5 years and a fine from P 50,000 to P 200,000. *Copyright Infringement* is punishable under the same law by imprisonment terms from 1 to 9 years and a fine from P 50,000 to P 1,500,000.

We thank **THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP** for the opportunity to reform and we will never commit these infringements again.

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ACCEPTS THE APOLOGY

THE CARTOON NETWORK LP, LLLP accepts the apology. As the owner of these trademarks and copyrights, we will not hesitate to prosecute any parties found manufacturing, selling and/or distributing OR offering to manufacture, sell and/or distribute products that falsely bear our trademarks and copyrights or otherwise infringe our intellectual property rights.

Further information relating to our intellectual property rights may be obtained from our legal counsel in the Philippines:

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12th Floor, Net One Center
26th Street corner 3rd Avenue,
Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City
Taguig, Metro Manila

Tel No.: 819-4700 / Facsimile: 816-0080, 728-7777

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Meralco Stock Cert. 285600A under the name Gregorio C. Arueb Jr. was lost. If no contest is receive new certificate will be issued. (PDI-feb. 13, 20 & 27, 2004)

LEGAL NOTICE

Deed of Adjudication
Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Mila Alaeo-Bonites consisting of one-half share in Unit P-3 of the Garden Heights situated at E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City was adjudicated equally among her heirs Cecilo Bonites and Schienalyn Bonites as per deed entered as Doc. No. 3673; Page No. 16; Book No. LXXIX; Series of 2003 in the Notarial Register of Atty. Antonio A. Bisnar of Roxas City
(PDI-Feb.13,20&27,2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANTONIO DEL ROSARIO MACARANAS has benn extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc 212, Page 043, Book XII, Series of 2003 before Notary Public Aty. Avelino B. Macaraeg of Quezon City
(PDI-Feb. 20, 27 & Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late BERNARDINO V. ABARIENTOS and EUGENIA C. ABARIENTOS was extrajudicially settle among their heirs as per Doc. No. 46 5 Page No. 94 Book No. II Series of 2004 as per Notary Public Atty. Mariano U. Palisoc of Makati City
(PDI-Feb. 20,27, Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Sps. Leonardo B. Reyes and Emerenciana G. Reyes was extrajudicially settled among their heirs per Doc. 6 Page 2 Book XVII Series of 2004 before notary public Pacifico A. Tunac of Quezon City
(PDI-Feb. 20, 27 & Mar. 5, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Zoilit Lalucis was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc No. 604; Page No. 61; Book No. XV, Series of 2004 as per Notary Public Atty. Dante M. Cortina
(PDI-Feb. 13, 20 & 27, 2004)

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CONVENTION SPEAKERS:

Mrs. Sonia M. Roco
Outstanding Woman & Educator
Plenary Speaker

Ms. Serely Geraldine D. Alcaraz
Manager for Marketing and Instruction, ETI-Dale Carnegie Philippines
Topic: "Personal and Professional Effectiveness"

Ms. Ivy Rose S. Villanueva
Division Head, Branch Banking Group, Philippine Savings Bank
Topic: "Foundations of Effective Leadership"

Mr. Chito C. San Mateo
HRD Head, Philippine Daily Inquirer
Topic: "Taking Charge of Your Future"

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For details and information pls. contact the PSTD Secretariat:
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Tel. Nos. 813-9072 TeleFax No. 812-9931
E-mail jpstd2k@yahoo.com
Look for Dons, Marissa or Fred

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PORT DISTRICT OFFICE OF VISAYAS
CIP COMPLEX, SERGING OSMEÑA BLVD., NORTH RECLAMATION AREA, CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES
TEL. NO. (032) 2323401-04, FAX NO. (032) 2321990
E-MAIL: pparo7@cvis.net.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Ports Authority through the Port District of Visayas invites interested bidders to submit Application to apply for eligibility, and subsequently to bid, if pre-qualified for the:

I.

A. Name of project : REMOVAL OF TRANSIT SHED AND IIMPROVEMENT OF STORAGE AREA
PORT OF TACLOBAN, TACLOBAN CITY

B. Scope of Work :

I	Demolition of Port Police Bldg. & Fence	Minor	VI	Demolition of Engineering Bodega	Minor
II	Demolition of Concrete Pavement (133.20 cu.m.)	Minor	VII	Demolition of Various Trees (19.0 units)	Minor
III	Demolition of 12m x 42m Transit Shed 1	Minor	VIII	Concreting of Storage Area, 1600 sq.m.	Major
IV	Demolition of 12m x 30m Transit Shed 2	Minor	IX	Demolition of Passenger Terminal Bldg.	Minor
V	(non-women) water separator (12,380.0 sq.m.)	Minor			

C. Minimum Equipment Requirements:

1.0	1 unit	Air Compressor 250-300 cfm	Owned	7.0	1 unit	Pneumatic Jackhammer	Owned
				8.0	1 unit	Payloader, 3 cu.m. Cap	Owned/Leased
2.0	1 unit	Concrete Cutter	Owned	9.0	1 unit	Power Chain Saw	Owned
3.0	2 units	Concrete Mixer, one bagger	Owned	10.0	1 unit	Road Grader, 135 Hp cap.	Owned/Leased
4.0	2 units	Concrete Vibratorr	Owned	11.0	1 unit	Road Roller with Compactor, 35T cap.	Owned/Leased
5.0	2 units	Cutting Outfits	Owned	12.0	1 unit	Transit Mixer, 3 cu.m. cap (min)	Owned/Leased
6.0	2 units	Dump Truck, 10 cu.m. cap	Owned	13.0	1 unit	Truck Mounted Crane, 25 tons capacity	Owned/Leased

D. Budget for the Contract : P 10,164,400.00
Source of Funding : PPA Corporate Fund
Contract Duration : 168 Calendar Days

E. Required PCAB Registration & Classification : Medium "A" Road & Highway Pavement

Bid Documents shall be issued only to eligible licensed contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents of Ph. 2,000.00.

F. Experience:
Similar in nature and complexity with at least 50% of the approved budget for the Contract to be bid and 50% of the major items of work

G. Cost of Pre-qualification or Eligibility Form : P 200.00
Place of Issuance : Philippine Ports Authority
Port District - Visayas
BAC Secretariat
CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area
Cebu City

H. Last day of Issuance of Pre-C Forms : March 01, 2004

I. Deadline of Submission of Accomplished Pre-C/Eligibility Forms : March 08, 2004

Only contractors classified and registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) on Contractor's License and Registration Particulars will be issued Eligibility Forms. The Forms are available at the BAC Secretariat, CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Boulevard, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. Interested applicants are required to bring a letter of intent and original copy of Contractor's valid PCAB License for verification/authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to the pre-qualification, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the RA 9184.

Further information may be obtained from the following:

BAC Secretariat : Tel. No. (032) 232-3401
PPA Website : www.ppa.com.ph
www.cvis.net.ph/ppa

The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any informality in the proposals received and to accept such bid most advantageous to the Philippine Ports Authority.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL T. GORME**
Port District Manager

(PDI--February 13 & 20, 2004)

EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE WITH ADJUDICATION

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late CASTOR LAVARIAS and FELOMINA ESCORPIZO, consisting of two (2) parcels of agricultural land, namely: Lot 1045-C-2 and Lot No. 1045-C-5, both Psd-02-058146, and portions of Lot 1045-C (LRC) Psd-146750, containing an area of 40,000 sq.m. each, covered by TCT Nos. T-300199 and T-300200, respectively, both situated in the Barrio of Nabbuan, City of Santiago, Isabela, are the subject of an Extra-Judicial Settlement of Estate with Adjudication executed by their heirs before Notary Public Eladio C. Velasco, of Asingan, Pangasinan per Doc. # 478 Page # 96 Book # II Series of 2003.

(PDI – Feb. 6, 13 & 20, 2004)

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ABS-CBN

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff
of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation
condole with the family of

FRANCISCO EVANGELISTA y FERMIN
"Ka Kiko"

24 July 1934 - 18 February 2004

who for fifty years of his life
offered himself to news and public service.
A very much revered radio reporter, radio commentator,
writer, producer, TV newscaster and TV news anchor...
a pillar in the broadcasting industry.
A true *kapamilya* in the service of the Filipino.

In loving memory of his significant contributions
to the broadcast industry
and his invaluable service to ABS-CBN.

Ka Kiko will be with his ABS-CBN Kapamilya today, 20 February,
at Studio 1, ABS-CBN Broadcast Centre from 1:00 - 5:00 P.M.
Afterwhich, his remains will lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel,
G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, 22 February, 9:00 A.M.
at the Loyola Memorial Park Marikina Crematorium.

GEN. MANUEL T. PEPINO, MNSA

February 20, 1942 – February 20, 2002

Masses will be offered today at the following:

LIBINGAN NG MGA BAYANI, Fort Bonifacio, Manila .... 12:00 noon
PINK SISTERS, Davao City .... 6:00 a.m.
GSIS PARISH, Davao City .... 6:00 a.m.

His wife **Mrs. Emilia Pepino**, and children **Marjorie P. Escorial, Maj. Marvin Pepino, Marie Louie P. Cabantac, Mildred P. Tan, Manuel Pepino, Jr., Michelle Pepino** and **Atty. Minerva Pepino, CPA** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

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• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
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In Loving Memory of

PAQUITA ESTRELLA-PUNSALAN

On her First Death Anniversary
December 3, 1932 – February 21, 2003

Holy Masses will be offered for her intention at the following churches:

February 13-21, 2004
St. Nicholas of Tolentine Cathedral, Cabanatuan City .... 6:00 a.m.
Ina ng Laging Saklolo (DAMBANA), Cabanatuan City .... 6:00 a.m.

February 20, 2004
St. Thomas D Apostle Catholic Church, Markham, Ontario, Canada .... 12:10 p.m.

February 21, 2004
Carmelite Monastery Carmel of Our Lady of Nazareth, Cabanatuan City .... 6:30 a.m.
St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish, San Nicolas, Gapan City .... 6:00 a.m.
Three Kings Parish, Gapan City .... 6:00 a.m.
Santisimo Rosario Parish Church, UST, España Blvd., Sampaloc, Manila .... 6:15 a.m.
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace, Our Lady of Edsa, Edsa, Quezon City .... 6:00 a.m.
St. Joseph's Convent of Perpetual Adoration, M. Hemady, New Mla., Q.C. .... 6:00 a.m.
Christ the King Parish, Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City .... 6:00 a.m.
The Medical City Chapel, Mandaluyong City .... 7:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City .... 6:15 a.m.
Mary the Queen Parish, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City .... 6:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City .... 6:15 a.m.
Carmel of Mary, Star of the Sea, Tanay, Rizal .... 6:30 a.m.
Benedictine Abbey, Lipa City .... 6:00 a.m.
Our Lady of Atonement Baguio Cathedral, Baguio City .... 7:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Kisad Road, Baguio City .... 6:30 a.m.
St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Pacdal, Baguio City .... 6:15 a.m.
Convent of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Brent Road, Baguio City .... 6:30 a.m.
Resurrection Catholic Community, 30W 350 Army Trail Road, Wayne, Illinois .... 5:00 p.m.
St. John D Evangelist, 427 Cedar Crest Drive, Streamwood, Illinois .... 4:30 p.m.

We, the PUNSALAN and ESTRELLA FAMILIES wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who condoled and shared in the hour of our bereavement and continuously praying for the repose of her soul.

INES ESTANISLAO ENRIQUEZ

of Dinalupihan, Bataan

Peacefully joined our Lord on February 18, 2004 at the age of 88.

She shall be missed by her dearest husband **Jose**; loving children **Totoy** & **Nora**, **Mel** & **Josue** and **Pat** & **Noel**; sisters, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Chapel 12A, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on February 24, 2004 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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SERGIO P. CORPUS

Died in the Grace of the Lord and peacefully joined his wife ***CLARA*** *on February 17, 2004 at the age of 90.*

His children **CRISTI, TONY, BEB** and **MANCHIE JAMORA, CHITO** and **TONETTE (LIZARES)**; grandchildren **AGNES** and **ARTHUR, JJ, TISHA, MELISSA** and **RAYMOND**; sister **MEDING**; in-laws **SISTER ESPERANZA, SPC** and **VICENTING OBEN** request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Faith Chapel of St. John Bosco Parish Church, Makati City.

Funeral Mass will be held at 10:00 a.m. February 21, 2004 at the St. Thomas More Chapel of the Ateneo Professional Schools, Rockwell, Makati City.

In lieu of flowers, donation to the Clara O. Corpus Foundation, Inc. will be greatly appreciated.

TELESFORO A. VEA

"Lolo Tel"

peacefully joined his Creator
on February 18, 2004 at the age of 86.

He lived a long and full life and served his family and others well with kindness, joy and wisdom.

We will miss our Lolo Tel.

His wife, **Agnes Banzon**, with whom he shared 57 years of love and happiness;

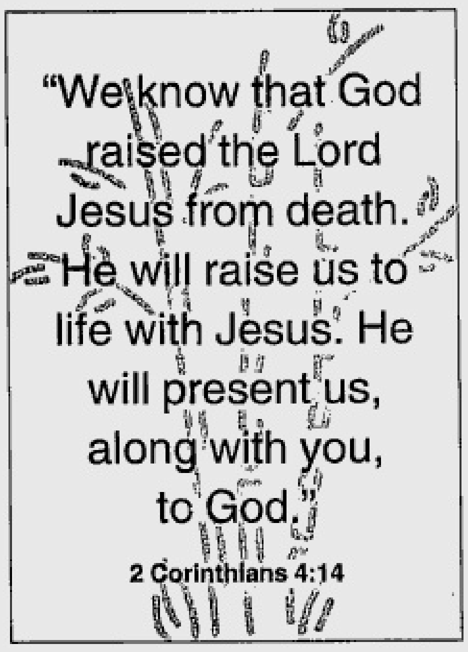
His children, **Vi** and **Manny Bautista**, **Doy** and **Lilin**, **Rey** and **Joji**, **Tos** and **Nilda**;

His grandchildren, **Eric**, **Marc** and **Brian**; **Ninna** and **Dré**, **Miguel** and **Roberto**; **Laya** and **Rocky**, **Ria**, **Kevin** and **Kian**; **Tara**, **Carissa**, **Jia** and **Carlo**, and **Tibbs**;

His great grandchildren, **Carrie** and **Denise**; **Toby** and **Kyla**.

His remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria dela Strada Church
Katipunan Road, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.



"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God."

2 Corinthians 4:14

JUANITO YANG CARDENAS

Died on February 17, 2004 at St. Luke's Medical Center at the age of 85.

His wife **Po Siok**; children **Lilia & Leo, Elisa & Manuel, Judy & Charles, James** (+) **& Salvacion, Sally & David, Mary, Betty & John, John & Berry, David & Mely**; grandchildren **Paul, William & Karen, Victor & Gina, Elizabeth, Michelle, Cassandra, Janice & Chris, Christopher, Janelle, Daphne & Joseph, Jon & Cathleen, Darlene & Solomon, Andrea, Leslie, Mark, Jasmine, Jenica, Sean, Jacqueline** (+), **Jennifer, Jonathan, Dianne, Darwin, Monica**; great grandson **Julian Curtis**.

His remains lie in state at the **Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine Parish**, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City at 9:00 a.m. on February 22, 2004.

"What we call the
beginning is often the end.
The end is where we start from."

FELICIANO S. GUECO

1921-2004

peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 17, 2004
at the age of 83

he is survived by his loving wife

ASUNCION A. GUECO

children

leo, neneng, daling, milet, & ray

spouses

joy, marijo, egay, tom, ronnie, pressy & eve

grandchildren

jackie, lee-j, lennard, leandro, jico, kokok, tintin, paul, victoria, ramon & cleon

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels Guadalupe, Makati City
Interment will be on Sunday, February 22, 2004 at Himlayang Pilipino
at 10:00 in the morning. There will be a Requiem Mass at 9:00 a.m.

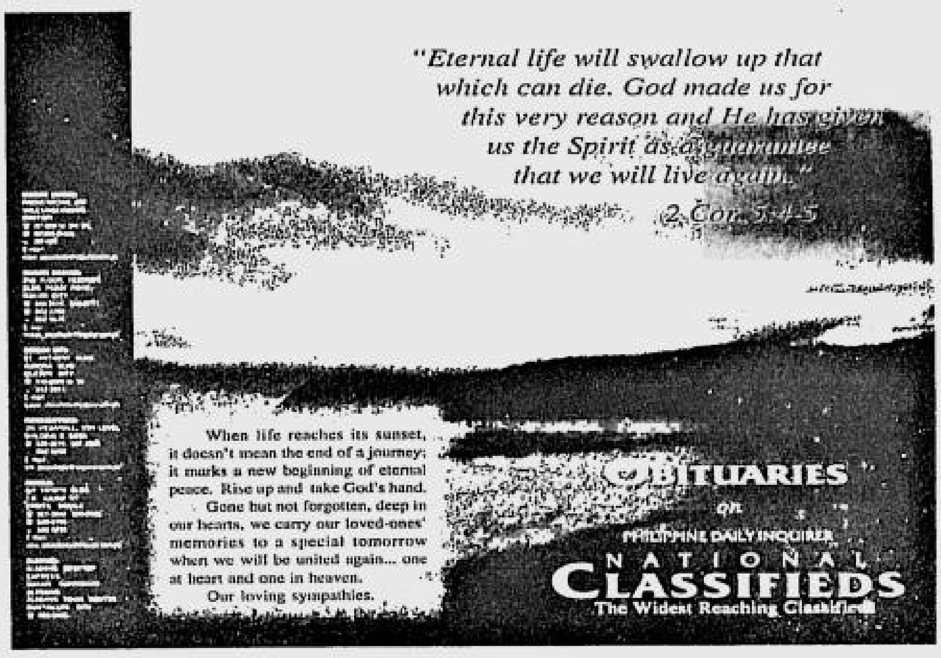
An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN



"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
2 Cor. 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand.
Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.
Our loving sympathies.

OBITUARIES on PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS The Widest Reaching Classifieds

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu

BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION to APPLY for ELIGIBILITY and to BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu, thru its BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC), invites all interested manufacturers, suppliers, and/or distributors to apply for eligibility and to submit BIDS for the SUPPLY of the following:

ITEM	PR No.	Purpose	TOTAL Approved BUDGET
1. Drugs and Medicines	04-485	1st Quarter Stocking for 2004	P 2,849,678.00
2. Medical/Dental/Laboratory Supplies	04-486	1st Quarter Stocking for 2004	P 1,632,253.83

In order to qualify for participation in the public bidding, the bidders should conform to the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Section 23.6 of the approved IRR-A of Republic Act No. 9184.

Eligibility and bid forms, tender documents and request for quotation shall be available for issuance at the BAC Secretariat, Provincial General Services Office, Dep-Ed Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City, within the government prescribed office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., starting February 14, 2004, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (Php 100.00).

Pre-Bid conference will be conducted on Wednesday, February 25, 2004, 1:30 p.m. for item no. 1 and 3:00 p.m. for item no. 2, at the BAC Conference Room, Office of the Provincial General Services, Dep-Ed Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

Sealed envelopes containing the duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals shall be received by the BAC Secretariat at the BAC Conference Room, Office of the Provincial General Services, Dep-Ed Building, Capitol, Cebu City, not later than 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon on Monday, March 08, 2004 and shall be publicly opened thereafter.

All particulars relative to eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of R.A. No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the government.

For more information, please contact the BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos. 253-9614 / 253-3995.

These requirements are posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, Dep Ed Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman, BAC

(PDI-Feb. 14 & 20, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
National Capital Region
U.N. Avenue, Manila

INVITATION TO REGISTER AND TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR BARGING AND CARGO HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA-NCR

The National Food Authority, National Capital Region, U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila invites all interested qualified Barging and Cargo Handling Services Contractors to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of Barging and Cargo Handling Services (Vessel-to-Truck Delivery) in the discharging of 157,000 MT, more or less, of NFA imported rice at the South/North Harbor, Port of Manila, with an Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of Php58,090,000.00.

Application forms and list of requirements for registration may be secured from the RBAC Secretariat upon submission of a letter of intent and after payment of a non-refundable/non-transferable registration fee of P2,000.00.

Only applicants with Certificate of Official Registration as NFA Barging and Cargo Handling Services Contractors issued by NFA-NCR RBAC may apply for eligibility and to bid for NCR Barging and Cargo Handling Services.

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Application for Registration/Requirements	– February 20, 2004 to March 3, 2004	8:00 AM-5:00 PM
2. Deadline for Submission of Registration Requirements	– March 3, 2004	5:00 PM
3. Issuance of Certificate of Official Registration	– February 23, 2004 to March 4, 2004	
4. Issuance of Application for Eligibility/Requirements	– February 23, 2004 to March 5, 2004	8:00 AM-5:00 PM
5. Pre-Bidding Conference	– March 8, 2004	10:00 AM
6. Bidding Proper	– March 19, 2004	9:00 AM

The Application Forms requirements for eligibility and to bid may be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-transferable/non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P5,000.00.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the Office of the Assistant Regional Director, NFA-NCR, UN Avenue, Paco, Manila with telephone numbers 563-94-37 and 564-20-71 to 74 local 111.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd) **ATTY. BASILIDES TACO**
Assistant Regional Director
Chairman, Bidding Committee

(PDI-February 20 & March 2, 2004)

More Classified Ads on Pages A16 & B16

PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION
Building 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road,
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-6001 to 47 local 2101-2104
Direct Line: 840-2024 / Fax No.: (632) 840-1459

PNOC
THE ENERGY COMPANY

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation ("PNOC-EC"), with office address at Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, announces the extension of the deadline for the submission of sealed bids to purchase 49% of its 10% participating interest in Service Contract No. 38 ("SC 38") to February 25, 2004.

SC 38 is a contract entered into by the Republic of the Philippines and Shell Philippines Exploration B.V., Shell Philippines LLC, Chevron Texaco Malampaya LLC and PNOC-EC for the purpose of offshore exploration and development of oil and gas in an area covering 384 square kilometers of deep water acreage located approximately 80 km northwest of the northern end of the island of Palawan in the South China Sea. PNOC-EC currently holds a 10% participating interest in SC 38 which includes the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project (the "Malampaya Project"). The Malampaya Project constitutes the largest single industrial project in the history of the Republic and is the first commercial exploitation of natural gas within the Philippines.

Interested parties may contact PNOC-EC's financial adviser, ING Bank N.V.-Investment Banking Group during regular office hours to obtain the relevant documents and information in connection with the bidding at the following offices:

In the Philippines,

21st Floor, Ayala Tower I
Ayala Avenue
Makati City
Philippines

In Hong Kong,

39th Floor, One International Finance Center
1 Harbour View Street,
Central
Hong Kong

Agents, brokers, advisers and other persons acting independent of any direct bidder will not be entertained. Only authorized representatives of bona fide bidders bearing authorization letters will be entertained.

All particulars relative to the pre-qualification of prospective bidders, registration, eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and awards of contract shall be governed by applicable laws, rules and regulations as well as relevant SC 38-related contracts and agreements. PNOC-EC does not assume any obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify any party for any expense that may be incurred in the preparation of a bid, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

PNOC-EC Privatization Committee reserves the right to reject any and all letters of intent or bids, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, or to annul the bidding process at any time prior to award of contract, to waive any required formality in the bids received or defects therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the government, without giving any reason therefore and incurring any liability to the affected bidders.

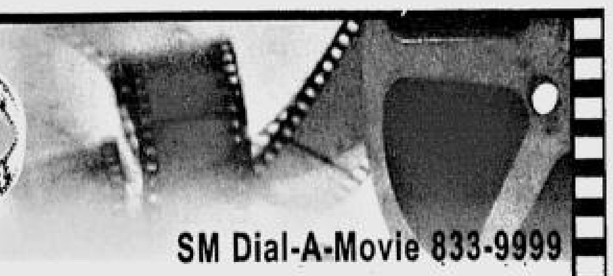
The recommendation by the PNOC-EC Privatization Committee to accept a bid is subject to the final approval of the Privatization Council.

(Sgd.) **NELSON B. BAYOT, SR.**
Chairman, PNOC-EC Privatization Committee

(PDI-February 20, 2004)

EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR RELOCATEES
National Housing Authority (NHA) Assistant General Manager Joseph Peter Sison (right) breaks ground with Montalban Mayor Pedro Cuerpo (left) and Senator Noli de Castro in simple rites held recently for Montalban Educational Center in Kasiglahan Village, Montalban, Rizal. The 166-classroom schoolbuildings will benefit relocatees to Kasiglahan Village and other residents of Montalban.

SM CINEMA



SM Dial-A-Movie 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 KUYA
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 BONE SNATCHER
5 WISHING STAIRS
6 COLD MOUNTAIN
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 RUNAWAY JURY

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 ROCHELLE VEGA IN CONCERT
2 STUCK ON YOU
3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4 OSCAR FILM FESTIVAL
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 KUYA
7 MILAN
8 MEMENTO MORI

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 COLD MOUNTAIN
4 KUYA
5 WISHING STAIRS
6 MILAN
7 CHASING LIBERTY
8 IN THE CUT

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(088) 8592884

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 MILAN
3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4 STUCK ON YOU

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 KUYA
3 MILNA
4 COLD MOUNTAIN

SM BICUTAN
7763055

1 KUYA
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN
4 COLD MOUNTAIN

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464595

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 CABIN FEVER
3 MILAN
4 KUYA

SM STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

1 MILAN
2 TOTALLY BLONDE
3 KUYA
4 MASTER AND COMMANDER
5 RUNAWAY JURY
6 WISHING STAIRS
7 HAUNTED MANSION
8 CHASING LIBERTY
9 COLD MOUNTAIN
10 21 GRAMS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 TOTALLY BLONDE
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 21 GRAMS
4 COLD MOUNTAIN
5 EMPEROR'S CLUB
6 OSCAR FILM FESTIVAL
7 MILAN
8 RUNAWAY JURY
9 KUYA
10 BONE SNATCHER

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 SHIRI
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 RUNAWAY JURY
5 KUYA
6 MILAN
7 KUYA
8 HAUNTED MANSION
9 COLD MOUNTAIN
10 WISHING STAIRS
11 MILAN
12 MASTER AND COMMANDER

SM CITY MARILAO

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 PURI
4 CHASING LIBERTY

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 GATHERING
2 RESERVED
3 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4 MILAN
5 MONA LISA SMILE
6 KUYA
7 RESERVED
8 DIABLO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901

1 EMPEROR'S CLUB
RESERVE-A-SEAT dial 6388800
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 COLD MOUNTAIN
4 BONE SNATCHER
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 DUDA DOUBT
7 OSCAR FILM FESTIVAL
8 21 GRAMS
9 MILAN
10 RUNAWAY JURY
11 KUYA
12 TOTALLY BLONDE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 MILAN
4 KUYA

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 BONE SNATCHER
2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 EMPEROR'S CLUB
4 RUNAWAY JURY
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 CHASING LIBERTY
7 ORCAR FILM FESTIVAL
8 TOTALLY BLONDE
9 MILAN
10 21 GRAMS
11 WISHING STAIRS
12 KUYA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976598

1 MILAN
2 DIABLO
3 KUYA
4 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
5 MONA LISA SMILE
6 STUCK ON YOU

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 KUYA
2 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
3 HAUNTED MANSION
4 WISHING STAIRS
5 COLD MOUNTAIN
6 MILAN

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7108977-80

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 MILAN
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 KUYA

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1 RUNAWAY JURY
11:10 FS/11:40
MF/2:15/4:45/7:15/9:25
LFS/9:50 LMF/12:00
END

2 COLD MOUNTAIN
11:45 FS/12:20
MF/3:30/6:40/9:20
LFS/9:50 LMF/12:25
END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8976
LATE NIGHT SCREENING
DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

PELIKULA LIPAVAN 2004

SM Iloilo FEB20 | friday

11:00am | Values Oriented Shorts
1:30pm | Magdalene Sisters by Peter Mullan
4:00pm | Ilonggo Shorts
6:30pm | Edades by Nick Deocampo
9:00pm | Greenlights by Robert H. Lieberman

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ALL DIGITAL SOUND
AYALA CINEMAS
PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 MILAN	1 TOTALLY BLONDE	Art Film 1 IN AMERICA 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 COLD MOUNTAIN 2:05 5:10 8:15 11:20	THX 1 RUNAWAY JURY
2 RUNAWAY JURY	2 COLD MOUNTAIN GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 RUNAWAY JURY 11:50 2:30 7:50 10:30	2 COLD MOUNTAIN 11:45, 2:50, 5:55, 9:00	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 RUNAWAY JURY 12:50 3:30 6:10 8:50 11:30	2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 KUYA	4 BONE SNATCHER 5 HAUNTED MANSION	Onstage REPERTORY'S FAME Feb.20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, Mar. 6&7	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 MILAN 1:00 3:35 6:10 8:45 11:20	3 MILAN
4 COLD MOUNTAIN	6 MILAN 7 21 GRAMS		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 CHASING LIBERTY 1:10 3:30 5:50 8:10 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS 5 21 GRAMS	4 HAUNTED MANSION 5 21 GRAMS

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice.
Reserve your seats by texting **SURESEATS GB3** or **SURESEATS G4** and send to **2333**.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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1 (DTS) MILAN
2 (SDDS) MILAN
3 (DTS) CHASING LIBERTY
4 GOLD (DTS) RUN AWAY JURY
5 GOLD (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
6 GOLD (SDDS) THE HAUNTED MANSION
7 GOLD (DOLBY) 21 GRAMS
8 [illegible] KUYA
9 [illegible] TOTALLY BLOND
10 [illegible] BONE SNATCHERS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) MILAN
2 (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
3 (DOLBY) RUN AWAY JURY
4 (DOLBY) KUYA

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274

1 KUYA
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 MILAN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 MILAN
2 KUYA
3 HAUNTED MANSION
COLD MOUNTAIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
5

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 PURI
2 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3 KUYA
4 MILAN
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 RUNAWAY JURY

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 KUYA

PREMIERE CINEMA
(Makati City) tel 892.2503
THX

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 MILAN
2 BROTHER BEAR

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 MILAN
2
3
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

5 RESERVE
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 MILAN
4 (SDDS) COLD MOUNTAIN
5 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
6 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
7 (DTS) WISHING STAIRS
8 PURI
9 IN THE CUT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 RESERVE
2 (SDDS)
3 (DTS)
4 (DOLBY)
5

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 MAPAGBIGAY
2 MILAN
3 (DTS) LOST ISLAND
4 KUYA
5 (SDDS) HAUNTED MANSION

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson HOT SPOT
Lords BRACING WOMEN

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 MILAN
2 KUYA
3 COLD MOUNTAIN
4 RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 TOTALLY BLONDE
4 KUYA
5 MILAN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 STUCK ON YOU
2 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
MALL CINEPLEX 7
Tel No. 911-3101 Loc. 821-8242-8400

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) RUNAWAY JURY
4 (SDDS) COLD MOUNTAIN
5 (DTS) HAUNTED MANSION
6 HAUNTED OFFICE
7 CHASING LIBERTY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) COLD MOUNTAIN
2 MILAN
3 (DTS ES) KUYA
4 IN THE CUT

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DTS) COLD MOUNTAIN

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 MILAN
2 BELPHEGOR / SPY
3 (DOLBY) BROTHER BEAR
4 (DTS) IN THE CUT

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1 KUYA
2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 (DTS) MILAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MILAN
2 (DTS) KUYA
3 (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
4 WISHING STAIR

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 MILAN
2 (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
3 (DTS) KUYA
4 WISHING STAIR

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 BROTHER BEAR
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) DIABLO

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 MONA LIZA
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) TEXAS CHAINSAW MASACRE
4 (DTS) IN THE CUT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MILAN
3 KUYA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) KAMANDAG NG ROSAS
2 IN THE CUT
3 KUYA
4 (DTS) GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
2 KUYA
3 (DTS) MILAN
4 WISHING STAIRS
5 GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 KUYA
2 MILAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 COLD MOUNTAIN

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 SKY OF LOVE
2 MONA LIZA
3 (DTS) MILAN
4 (DOLBY) LAST SAMURAI

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS) RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 TWIN EFFECTS
2 MONA LIZA
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 MILAN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 KUYA
2 MILAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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julia roberts
mona lisa smile

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	FRIDA / BAHID
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	MILAN
B	BURLESK KING
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MILAN
CINEMA-2	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-3	WISHING STAIRS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MASTER AND COMMANDER (RI)
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TALE OF TWO SISTERS
CINEMA-6	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
CINEMA-7	MAGIC KITCHEN
CINEMA-8	GUSTO KO SA LALAKI (RI)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RUNAWAY JURY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HAUNTED MANSION
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	COLD MOUNTAIN
CINEMA-12	CHASING LIBERTY
CINEMA-14	KUYA
CINEMA-15	MILAN

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	MILAN
CINEMA-1	MONA LISA SMILE
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-4	CLOSED

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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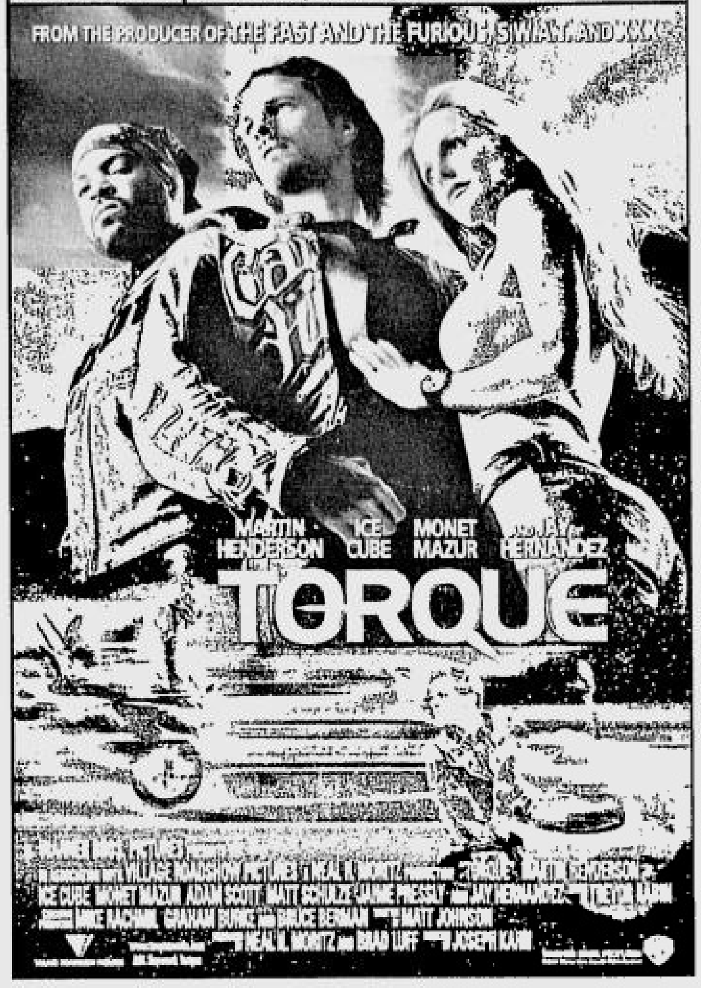
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1	MILAN	11:45, 2:15, 4:45 7:15, 9:45	PG-13
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	11:00, 2:00, 5:00 8:00, 11:00	R-18
3	RUNAWAY JURY	11:30, 2:20, 5:10 8:00, 10:50	R-13
4	HAUNTED MANSION	11:30, 1:30, 3:30 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	GP

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	RUNAWAY JURY	12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	R13
CINEMA 2	COLD MOUNTAIN	12:05, 3:20, 6:30, 9:40	R18

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7 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

13 BRITISH ACADEMY FILM AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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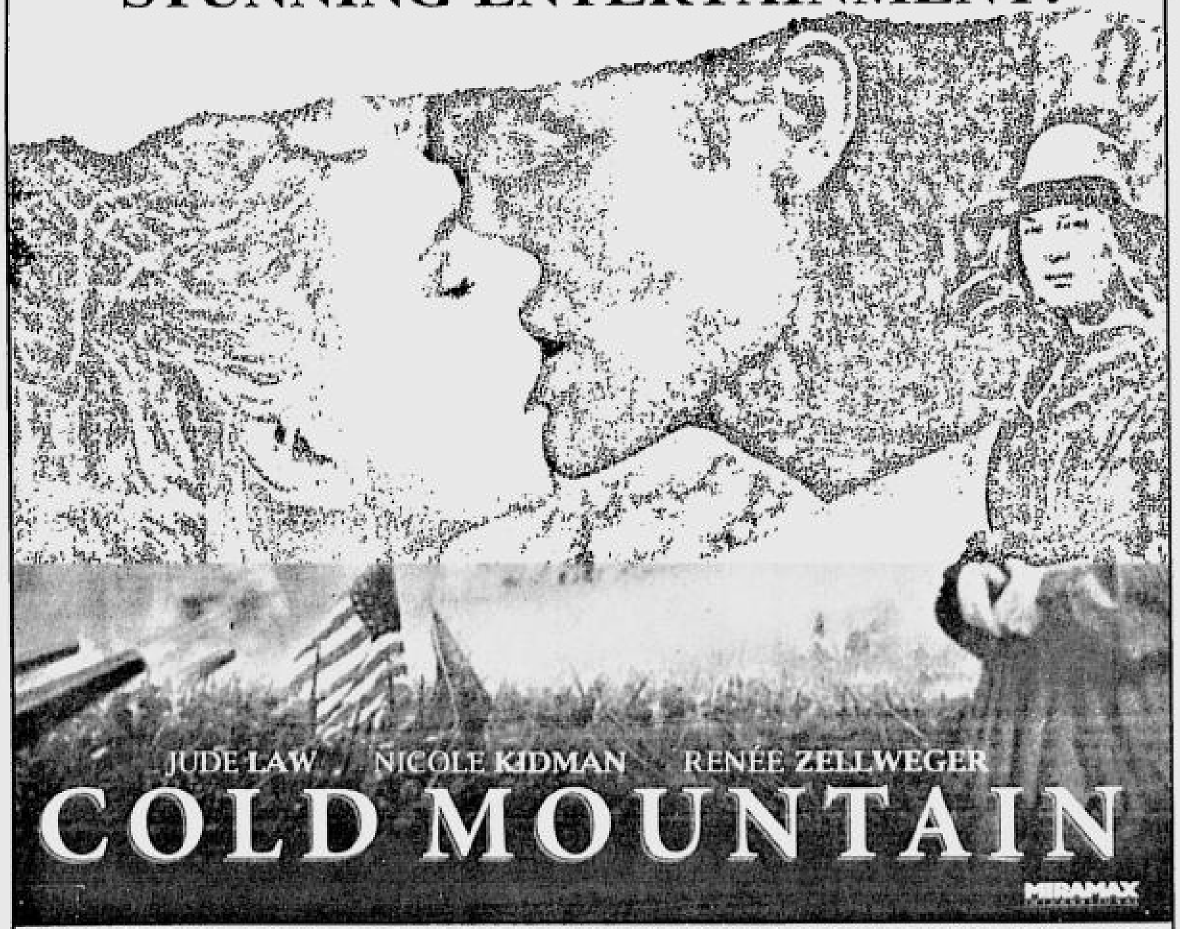

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CINEMA 1 THX	HAUNTED MANSION	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
2	MILAN	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:20, 1:15, 4:10, 7:05, 10:00
4	TOTALLY BLONDE	12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 9:00
5	CRUNAWAY JURY	10:10, 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
6	CHASING LIBERTY	10:20, 12:30, 2:40, 4:50
7	BONE SNATCHER	12:30, 2:35, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
8	21 GRAMS	11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:40, 9:00
9	KUYA	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
10	WISHING STAIRS	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
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Regular Price: P130 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA

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DOLBY DIGITAL

1	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:10, 1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:50
2	MILAN	11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50
3	KUYA	10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
4	WISHING STAIRS	10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:50
5	RUNAWAY JURY	11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:00
6	HAUNTED MANSION	10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:50 SDDS
7	CHASING LIBERTY	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

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682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1	HAUNTED MANSION	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	11:10, 2:25, 5:40, 9:00
3	KUYA	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
4	CHASING LIBERTY	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
5	RUNAWAY JURY	10:20, 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
6	MASTER AND COMMANDER/ MYSTIC RIVER	11:30, 2:10, 4:15, 6:55, 9:00
	MILAN	10:15, 12:55, 3:35, 6:15, 9:00
8	WISHING STAIRS	11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW

935-3229 / 31

1	HAUNTED MANSION	11:00, 12:50, 2:45, 4:40, 6:35, 8:30
2	CHASING LIBERTY	11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40
3	KUYA	10:35, 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 8:50
4	WISHING STAIRS	10:40, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:10
5	MILAN	10:30, 12:35, 3:20, 6:05, 8:50
6	RUNAWAY JURY	10:10, 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
7	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:10, 11:40, 2:30, 5:20, 8:30
8	MASTER COMMANDER / MYSTIC RIVER	11:45, 2:40, 5:20, 8:30

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	KUYA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	KUYA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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2	WISHING STAIRS
3	KUYA
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5	COLD MOUNTAIN

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1	MILAN
2	THE TWINS EFFECT
3	HAUNTED OFFICE
4	CHASING LIBERTY
5	MONA LISA SMILE

Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS

852-2125

1	KUYA
2	MILAN
3	CHASING LIBERTY
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5	THE HAUNTED MANSION

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS

875-1927 / 961-5270

1	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
2	WISHING STAIRS
3	MILAN
4	KUYA
5	HAUNTED MANSION
6	COLD MOUNTAIN

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	CHASING LIBERTY
3	KUYA
4 DTS	COLD MOUNTAIN
5	MILAN
6	WISHING STAIRS

BACOLOD

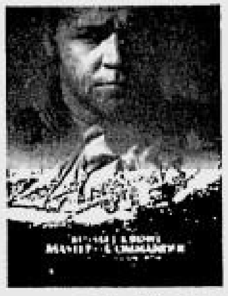
441-0458/59

1	MILAN
2	MONA LISA SMILE
3	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4	DIABLO
5	UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN
6	HAUNTED OFFICE

ILOILO

336-8070/78

1	MONA LISA SMILE
2	KUYA
3	MILAN
4	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
5	DIABLO
6	THE GATHERING



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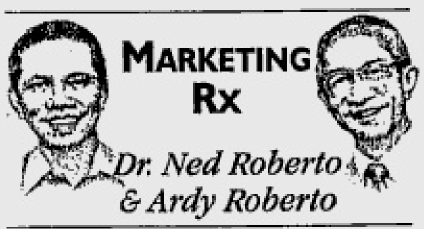
BUSINESS Friday

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

How to do painless price increases



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

AN eternal question that will haunt Filipino marketers faced with an ever-devaluating peso is: How do I increase the selling price of my products without losing my customers?

The other day, if you've noticed, the price of this paper you are reading just increased by P3. We have no idea how the amount of the increase was arrived at. We, as readers and customers of this paper just assume that it's necessary and well, trust that we're not being taken for a ride.

Many times, marketers or the finance guys in the office will determine the price increase by simply adding on the increase in cost. Many will hold off and absorb the cost of a more expensive dollar (assuming a significant portion of your product or service—if for example you have to remit royalties on services in dollars—is imported) by trying to be more cost efficient.

That's *barok* marketing.

Ask the right question

The best way to go about a price increase is to ask the consumer—your customer—the question: at what price are you NOT willing to buy this product anymore? Basically, when you do your market research, you never ask them what price they are willing to pay. You'll get baloney answers. They'll say, "*Siguro iyong mura.*" People don't know what they want. But they do know what they DON'T WANT. Case in point. Just ask your spouse or date, "Honey where do you want to eat?" He or she will say, "I don't know. *Ikaw*?" As soon as you make some suggestions like, "Okay, how about Kermit's" You'll get a reaction like, "Ay! I don't like. We just had *adobong* frog's legs the other night." Then you suggest a few more restaurants and the two of you will basically arrive at a decision by process of elimination.

It's the same thing with pricing your products. Let your customer's tell you at what price they are not willing to pay anymore for your product or service. There is an organized, scientific way of doing this. Most professional research agencies now know how to do this. (The senior MRx pioneered and revolutionized this kind of price research and taught most of the research agencies how to use it.) If you're an entrepreneur, you can still do this kind of research, do-it-yourself-style.

All you have to do is show your product or a description of your product and produce a chart displaying the current price of your product/s or service/s. Then show a series of prices that are higher than the current price. Then ask the question. "Okay, here's the price of the product that you are currently buying. At what price will you begin to substitute, replace or stop buying this product?" Then you show the prices in increasing scale. Take note of their answers. If you have a small trading business with 20 or 30 customers, then you can do a census and ask all of your customers. If you have 20,000 customers, then ask your friendly neighborhood research agency to survey a correct sampling of your customer base.

Surprise!

At the end of the day, you'll have data that might surprise you. You may even find out that a good majority of your customers are so loyal to your product that they would tolerate a price increase much higher than what you were thinking of. A couple of clients of ours actually discovered this. For example. At what price would you, dear reader, stop buying this newspaper? At P20? How about P22? How about P25? How about P27? (Hey, it would be cool if you could let us know. Text us your answer at 0917-832-2638. Text "A" for P20, "B" for P22, "C" for P25, "D" for P25, "E" for P27.)

Of course, greed and taking advantage of your customers' loyalty is another matter. But wouldn't you rather have that data, that intimate knowledge of what the consumer is thinking, and base your price increase decision on that? (Versus making a decision based on a bunch of marketing and finance executives' hunches and assumptions.)

'Killing me softly...'

One of the most popular sessions in our seminars and in the senior MRx's classes at the Asian Institute of Management, is the session on price sensitivity research. (You can also read about this in the book, "User-Friendly Marketing Research 2nd edition" available at National Bookstore or the AIM Library.) What you'll also learn there is that consumers would rather be slapped with one big price increase instead of a series of small increases. (Of course, if you are Meralco or Caltex, that's a different story.)

When you increase prices little by little on a regular basis, consumers feel the pain. Some describe it as if they're being slowly stabbed with a blunt screw driver. Some consumers compare it to going to a dentist to have an abscessed tooth pulled out. "Don't do it slowly! Do what you've got to do! Pull it out and let's get the pain over with!" What they'd rather have you do is to give them one big punch/punishment, one time, with the next one to come, well, six years from now when Noli de Castro or Bong Revilla makes a run for the presidency. Only God, or Lucio Tan, knows what the exchange rate will be by that time. So keep a copy of this column, it will come in handy again in 2010.

Email us at MarketingRx@SaltandLightVentures.com. New! Now you can text in your questions or comments at 0917-832-2638. Please give your name together with your comment or question if you wish to receive text updates from us beginning March.

Tax break that was almost lost to US citizens and greencard holders

By Ruben R. Rubio and Josephine L. Adalem
SGV & CO

TAX-FILES

BEFORE the Tax Reform Act of 1997, the Philippines was one of the few countries that taxed the worldwide income of its citizens residing abroad, which is similar to the system of taxation in the United States.

When the Tax Reform Act took effect on Jan. 1, 1998, nonresident Filipino citizens and aliens, whether resident or nonresident, became subject to Philippine tax only on their Philippine source income.

The United States, on the other hand, continues to tax its citizens and permanent resident aliens on their worldwide income, regardless of where it is earned, paid or received. In order to make the tax treatment of Americans working abroad more competitive with foreign nationals, Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 911 was implemented in 1926 with the primary objective of boosting America's access to global markets. It also attempts to increase the global competitiveness of companies employing US citizens and resident aliens overseas and to retain jobs for qualified US workers in important international posts.

IRC Section 911 allows US citizens and US permanent residents living and working overseas to exclude from gross income up to $80,000 in foreign earnings and additional exclusion amount for foreign housing expenses.

How does IRC Section 911 exclusion work? Special elective exclusions that can reduce taxable income by substantial amounts are given to US citizens and resident aliens who would qualify to claim the exclusions.

Self employed individuals are also entitled to the foreign earned income exclusion. In addition, they may also elect a housing deduction (versus housing exclusion for salaried individuals).

An individual who would qualify to claim the exclusions is a US citizen who meets either a bona fide residence or physical presence test and has a foreign tax home. In the absence of a treaty nondiscrimination provision, a resident alien of the US can qualify only if he satisfies the physical presence test and has a foreign tax home. In certain cases, a nonresident alien spouse who elects to file jointly with a US citizen or resident may likewise qualify under the physical presence test.

In general, an individual tax home is the location of his or her principal place of employment.

Under the bona fide residence test, the US individual is required to be a bona fide resident of a foreign country or countries for an uninterrupted period that includes an entire taxable year (calendar year).

Whether a person is a bona fide resident of a foreign country is a subjective question of intent to reside in the foreign country.

Such intent is determined by the facts and circumstances in each situation, including the purpose of the trip and the nature and length of the period overseas. The moment a US individual has met this test for an entire taxable year, such qualification is retroactive to the first day of establishing bona fide residence. Occasional trips to the US for business or vacation do not affect qualification.

The second test requires the US individual to have a foreign tax home and be physically present in a foreign country or countries for 330 full days during any consecutive 12-month period. The test requires only the counting of qualifying days. There is normally no reference to the US individual's intentions regarding "permanence or to any other factors that determine bona fide residence.

Income that a US individual can claim as exclusion must be foreign source earned income. Earned income is income received for the performance of personal service. It does not include income of a passive nature, such as dividends and interest. For purposes of the exclusions, the term "foreign earned income does not include amounts paid by the US government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities.

The term "foreign source earned income encompasses all income received for personal services performed outside of the United States.

Where the income is paid from or received is irrelevant. In addition to the foreign earned income exclusion, qualified individuals may elect to exclude from US taxable income the excess of reasonable housing expenses over a base housing amount. The base housing amount is determined annually at 16 percent of the salary of a US government employee, GS-14, step 1, prorated on a daily basis for the number of days during the tax year in which the employee has a tax home overseas.

When the US Senate finance committee approved on May 8, 2003 a tax bill, Senate Bill 1054, that included a provision eliminating IRC Section 911 exclusion given to Americans working abroad for tax years starting Jan. 1, 2004, Americans working overseas felt that they were about to face an unexpected threat, and that is a substantial increase in their taxes. The proposed repeal of IRC Section 911 was included in S. 1054, "Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003. The bill aimed to relieve the tax burden while providing a better environment in which businesses can create new jobs. The bill did not contain any tax increases. But in order to finance the tax relief measures in the Senate's growth package, it sought to end the tax break for Americans living overseas.

Opponents of ending the provision said it could lead to double taxation on the part of Americans working abroad in the sense that they already may be taxed in the country where they work. Some also said businesses need the tax break to lure workers to overseas jobs.

Before the bill was passed into law, there were some revenue raising provisions that were dropped from the final bill. It must have been a big relief for Americans working overseas when they learned that one of the provisions that were excluded from the final bill was the proposed repeal of the Section 911 foreign earned income exclusion.

The "Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003, known as one of the largest tax cut in US history, was signed into law by President Bush on May 28, 2003. It provides significant tax relief for most individuals. Many of the provisions of the new law are effective retroactive to Jan. 1, 2003 and US taxpayers might be able to get a feel of these changes within the next few months. Beginning in July, some individuals may already have received rebate checks from the US Treasury Department and salaried individuals will notice an increase in their take-home pay. Comparing this to past legislation wherein taxpayers had to wait years before they feel the effect of tax relief, this new law will provide more than 80 percent of the tax savings over the next three years or so. Some of the provisions that would be of interest to individual taxpayers are the following:

- Reduction of the tax rate for capital gains
- Acceleration of the increase in tax-rate reductions
- Acceleration of the increase in both the standard deduction for married couples and the child tax credit
- Provision of an Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) relief to individuals
- Increase in bonus depreciation and Section 179 expensing for small businesses

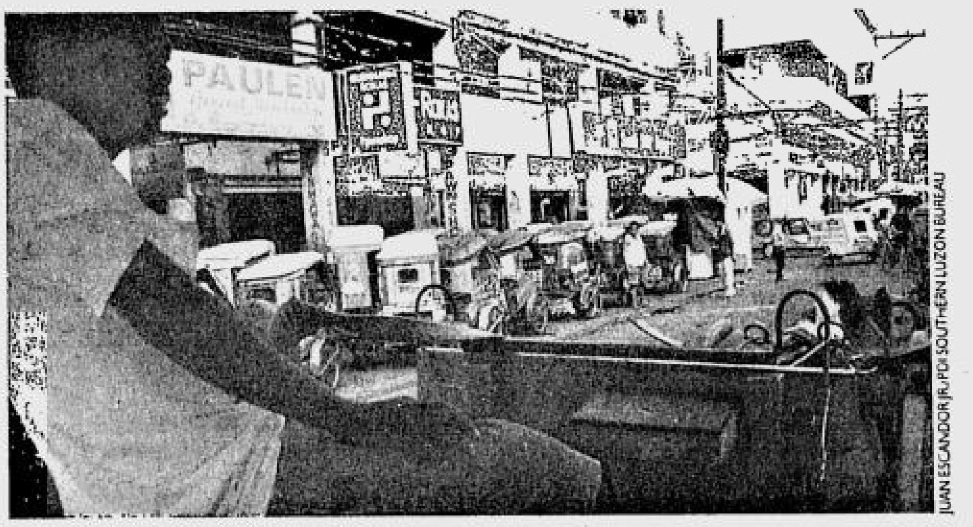
Had the repeal of IRC Section 911 been included in the bill that was passed into law, this would have resulted in a significant increase in the financial burden on US multinationals and thereby reducing their ability to compete in foreign jurisdictions. This would even have resulted in the shift of jobs now being held by US citizens working abroad to other nationals. For US nationals who are tax equalized, the financial burden is shifted to their multinational company employer.

Had IRC Section 911 exclusion given to Americans working abroad been eliminated, US citizens or US permanent residents living abroad would have ended up paying higher taxes to Uncle Sam. Although they can claim a credit on their US taxes for taxes paid to foreign countries, the effect of the excluded income in terms of US taxes is substantial. Further, additional US tax could arise due to the US Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) mechanism. The additional tax as a result of the AMT could not be fully offset through the foreign tax credit mechanisms because of limitations in the amount of credit that could be claimed.

Usually, a portion or all of US individual's income becomes subject to foreign tax, which may be imposed as a result of residence or presence in the foreign country. The criteria for imposing the tax, the income subject to tax, and the rates of tax differ from country to country.

For example, an alien, whether a resident or a non-resident in the Philippines is subject to Philippine tax only on Philippine source income. Philippine source income refers to income for services rendered in the Philippines regardless of the place where the payment was made, the contract for service was negotiated, or the payer resided.

If foreign tax is imposed, the US individual will be subject to taxes both in the foreign country and in the United States. The foreign tax provisions are designed to eliminate the double taxation of foreign source income. Hence, US taxpayers may elect to claim a credit for foreign income taxes paid or accrued during the taxable year, subject to separate limitations and certain other rules.



ONE of only 13 "caretelas" still plying the sreets of Naga City.

JUAN ESCANDOR JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Three-wheeled vehicle drives horses off the road

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NAGA CITY—UP until the late '60s, the "caretela" or horse-drawn carriage was the main mode of transportation in the back streets of this city.

Today, there are only 13 caretelas left, pulled by aging horses, plying the streets daily. The innovative idea of a young entrepreneur in 1967 unwittingly led to the slow obsolescence of the carriages.

Unsatisfied with just selling motorcycles for private use, William Y. Concepcion created a design that upgraded the motorcycle for public use.

Concepcion's "trimobile" eventually changed the mass transportation facility in Naga City.

Dealership

Concepcion earned his degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration at the Mapua Institute of Technology by working as a helper in a printing press firm in Manila.

After graduation in 1954, he went back to Naga City to help his family rise from poverty. Because he had no capital to start a business of his own, he applied for a dealership arrangement with Honda Motors Corp., which was granted.

Concepcion made good in his dealership and earned the trust of other motor companies, which extended him other dealerships like Yamaha and Bridgetone.

It was Bridgetone that gave Concepcion a real break. With its very lenient payback agreement of products sold, the motorcycle company gave him enough room to maneuver his business to expand and increase his profits.

Observing the mode of transportation inside Naga City in the '60s excited Concepcion. From here, he made his plan to introduce tricycle as a transportation mode to replace the hundreds of caretela units that plied the streets.

He was faced with two major challenges. One was an ordinance that prohibited tricycles in the streets; the other one was the culture of using the caretela to go to short distances.

Concepcion studied the ordinance and found that it allowed any three-wheeled roofed motor vehicles with shielded bodies to ply the streets.

With the loophole in the ordinance, he was sure he could persuade the local government to approve a franchise to operate his trimobile.

He got permission to operate six units.

After he overcame one major stumbling block, it became easier for him to sell the idea to the residents. He banked on convenience and speed of using the trimobile compared with the caretela.

Some quarters, however, were opposed to it.

To make his product acceptable to consumers, Concepcion offered free ride to the public in the first several months of his trimobile service business until experience showed it was indeed a better means of transportation than the centuries-old caretela.

He successfully debunked the perceived danger of riding the trimobile that a group opposing its use for public transportation was citing.

Because he knew that the first line of working people to be displaced with the introduction of trimobile units in Naga City were the *kutseros*, he taught and encouraged them to drive the trimobile units with an incentive bonus. With P6-a-day amortization and provision of ownership after one-year payment as a promotional strategy, droves of kutseros shifted to driving trimobile units.

More than 40 years have passed, the six units of trimobile that Concepcion introduced as a mode of public transportation grew to 1,500 registered units.

Today, the 13 caretelas left are nostalgic relics of a past landscape.

P&G AMONG MAKATI'S TOP TAXPAYERS. Procter & Gamble (Phils.) Inc. and P&G Asia Pte. Ltd. were among the top taxpayers of East and North Makati. Photo shows BIR Commisioner Guillermo Parayno, P&G's Ma. Nora N. Manalo, Simplicio Madulara, Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan, and Anselmo Adriano.

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   b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract: Provided, however, That Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of:

Schedule	Description	Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
I	PORTABLE METER TEST EQUIPMENT	7 SETS	P 18,200,000.00
II	METER SEAL	10,000 PCS.	P 375,000.00
III	METER BOX	30 PCS.	P 450,000.00
IV	METER TEST	30 PCS.	P 405,000.00
TOTAL			P 19,430,000.00

3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued.
   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is ***P19,430,000.00*** to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting ***February 13, 2004 to March 4, 2004*** at The BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on ***February 25, 2004*** at 10:00 a.m. at the Admin Conference Room, G/F TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on before ***10:00 a.m. of March 8, 2004*** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO G. LABAYANI
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb. 13 & 20, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
CAREER EXECUTIVE SERVICE BOARD
No. 3 Marcelino Street, Holy Spirit Drive, Diliman, Quezon City 1127
Tel. Nos. 951-4981 to 85 (Trunkline) / 951-3306 (Fax)
website: www.cesboard.gov.ph

Circular No 3
Series of 2004

TO All Heads of Departments and Agencies of the National Government, including Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations with Original Charters, and all Officials in the Career Executive Service

SUBJECT REVISED POLICY ON THE ASSESSMENT CENTER COST

Pursuant to CESB Resolution No. 518 dated November 25, 2003, the Board hereby amends Section 5, Article IV of CESB Resolution No. 459, series of 2002, hereinafter known as the "Revised Policy on the Assessment Center Cost" which shall now read as follows:

"**Section 5. Assessment Center Cost.** The following rules shall apply on the Assessment Center Cost:

5.1 The Board shall shoulder the Assessment Center cost of the following applicants, namely:

5.1.1 A career presidential appointee assigned to or who acts as Officer-in-Charge of a CES position;

5.1.2 One who is appointed to or who acts as Officer-in-Charge of division chief positions in the national government agencies covered by the CES, whose third level officials are appointed by the President;

The Board shall shoulder the Assessment Center Cost of the above-stated applicants only once. If the said applicants fail in the Assessment Center on their first take and decide to re-take it, they shall be required to shoulder the cost of their subsequent attempts.

5.2 All other applicants, whether coming from the national government agencies or government-owned or controlled corporations, whose third level officials are non-presidential appointees, other respective agencies, including those from the private sector, shall shoulder the cost of the Assessment Center regardless of whether it is their first take or subsequent attempts."

The foregoing amendatory provision shall apply as follows:

1. Upon the effectivity of this resolution, the payment of the Assessment Center cost of all MATB applicants shall be made in accordance with the Revised Policy on the Assessment Center cost provided in this resolution;

2. Applicants, who are on-stream for conferment of the four-stage CES Eligibility Examination process, shall be governed by the old policy on the Assessment Center cost provided under the Revised Policy on CES Eligibility (CESB Res. No. 459 s. 2002).

This Circular shall take effect immediately.

Done in Quezon City, Philippines this 17th day of February, 2004.

KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID
Chairperson

Attested by:

ARTURO M. LACHICA
Deputy Executive Director

(PDI–February 20, 2004)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(Head Office)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors currently with Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for pre-qualification and if later found qualified, to bid for the project described below.

Project Title	**Proposed Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Gym, Roof Deck, 5-Storey Bldg.**
Scope of Work	: Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services and performing all operations necessary for the completion of the proposed rehabilitation and upgrading of the gym, roofdeck, 5-storey bldg. in accordance with the approved plans & specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.
Project Location	: BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts., Manila
Approved Budget	: Pesos Eleven Million Ninety One Thousand Pesos Only (P11,091,000.00)
Source of Funding	: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)	
PCAB License	: IAC category of at least Medium "A" (Building and Industrial Plant)
Contractor's Construction Experience	: Should have completed within the last five (5) years (1999 to present) at least two (2) projects involving rehabilitation of offices and/or buildings or projects similar in nature and complexity one of which costs not less than five million five hundred thousand pesos
Certification of Satisfactory Performance	: Should be able to submit notarized affidavits of Satisfactory Performance for the declared completed similar project.
Net Financial Contracting Capacity computed as 10x *(Current Asset less Current Liabilities)* minus *(Value of all on-going contracts including awarded yet to be started)*	: at least Eleven Million Ninety One Thousand Pesos (P11,091,000.00)
Credit Line/Cash Deposit Certificate Reqt.	: Pesos One Million One Hundred Nine Thousand Pesos (P1,109,000.00)
Eligibility Statement Forms	
Cost of Forms	Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
Date of Issuance	Feb. 23 to 27, 2004
Deadline of Submission	March 2, 2004
Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
Date of Issuance	: March 10, 2004
Bid/Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents
Cost of Documents	. Five Thousand Pesos per set (P5,000.00/set)
Date of Issuance	March 11 to 12, 2004
Pre-bid Conference	
Date and Time	: March 16, 2004 10:00 AM
Venue	BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts.
Submission and Opening of Bids	
Deadline of Submission	April 13, 2004 / 10:00 a.m.

For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat – telephone no. 524-70911 local 3143.

The venue for the issuance and submission of accomplished eligibility statements and bid documents is at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor – Five Storey Building, BSP Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts., Manila, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 nn & 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Schedule for issuance of notice of eligibility/ineligibility up to deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

Guidelines stipulated in the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 & its implementing Rules and Regulations shall apply relative to the bidding and award of contract including its implementation.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) MARCOS J. SIONGCO, JR.
Chairman

(PDI-February 20 & 26, 2004)

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- Down payment for as low as ₱ 193,000 for the VX200 A/T
- Low monthly payments of ₱ 7,561 for the Revo DLX DSL*
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GSR A/T	881,000.00	176,200.00	61,272	42,183	33,504	23,998	19,565	16,056
GSX A/T	842,000.00	168,400.00	57,731	39,745	31,569	22,613	18,435	15,693
DLX A/T	802,000.00	160,400.00	54,839	37,754	29,020	21,481	17,513	14,907
GL GAS	693,000.00	138,600.00	46,960	32,330	25,686	18,399	15,000	12,766
DLX DSL	685,000.00	137,000.00	46,382	31,932	25,370	18,172	14,815	12,608
DLX DSL (50% DP)	685,000.00	342,500.00	28,542	19,149	15,227	10,907	8,892	7,561

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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2004-004

PD Ref. No.: PB040115-EL0007

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO - BAC) - HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility who are.
    a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship, or
    b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines, or
    c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
    d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract. Provided, however, That Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
    e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of

Schedule	Description	Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
I	PORTABLE METER TEST EQUIPMENT	7 SETS	P 18,200,000.00
II	METER SEAL	10,000 PCS.	P 375,000.00
III	METER BOX	30 PCS.	P 450,000.00
IV	METER TEST	30 PCS.	P 405,000.00
TOTAL			P 19,430,000.00

3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued
   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is *P19,430,000.00* to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting *February 13, 2004 to March 4, 2004* at The BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on *February 25, 2004* at 10:00 a.m. at the Admin Conference Room, G/F TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on before *10:00 a.m. of March 8, 2004* at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address

(Sgd.) ANTONIO G. LABAYANI
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb. 13 & 20, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
CAREER EXECUTIVE SERVICE BOARD
No. 3 Marcelino Street, Holy Spirit Drive, Diliman, Quezon City 1127
Tel. Nos. 951-4981 to 85 (Trunkline) / 951-3306 (Fax)
website: www.cesboard.gov.ph

Circular No. 3
Series of 2004

TO: All Heads of Departments and Agencies of the National Government, including Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations with Original Charters, and all Officials in the Career Executive Service

SUBJECT: REVISED POLICY ON THE ASSESSMENT CENTER COST

Pursuant to CESB Resolution No. 518 dated November 25, 2003, the Board hereby amends Section 5, Article IV of CESB Resolution No. 459, series of 2002, hereinafter known as the "Revised Policy on the Assessment Center Cost" which shall now read as follows:

"**Section 5. Assessment Center Cost.** The following rules shall apply on the Assessment Center Cost.

5.1 The Board shall shoulder the Assessment Center cost of the following applicants, namely.

5.1.1 A career presidential appointee assigned to or who acts as Officer-in-Charge of a CES position,

5.1.2 One who is appointed to or who acts as Officer-in-Charge of division chief positions in the national government agencies covered by the CES, whose third level officials are appointed by the President;

The Board shall shoulder the Assessment Center Cost of the above-stated applicants only once. If the said applicants fail in the Assessment Center on their first take and decide to re-take it, they shall be required to shoulder the cost of their subsequent attempts.

5.2 All other applicants, whether coming from the national government agencies or government-owned or controlled corporations, whose third level officials are non-presidential appointees, other respective agencies, including those from the private sector, shall shoulder the cost of the Assessment Center regardless of whether it is their first take or subsequent attempts."

The foregoing amendatory provision shall apply as follows:

1. Upon the effectivity of this resolution, the payment of the Assessment Center cost of all MATB applicants shall be made in accordance with the Revised Policy on the Assessment Center cost provided in this resolution;
2. Applicants, who are on-stream for conferment of the four-stage CES Eligibility Examination process, shall be governed by the old policy on the Assessment Center cost provided under the Revised Policy on CES Eligibility (CESB Res. No. 459 s. 2002)

This Circular shall take effect immediately.

Done in Quezon City, Philippines this 17th day of February, 2004.

KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID
Chairperson

Attested by

ARTURO M. LACHICA
Deputy Executive Director

(PDI-February 20, 2004)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(Head Office)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors currently with Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for pre-qualification and if later found qualified, to bid for the project described below

Project Title	**Proposed Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Gym, Roof Deck, 5-Storey Bldg.**
Scope of Work	Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services and performing all operations necessary for the completion of the proposed rehabilitation and upgrading of the gym, roofdeck, 5-storey bldg. in accordance with the approved plans & specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract
Project Location	BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts., Manila
Approved Budget	Pesos Eleven Million Ninety One Thousand Pesos Only (P11,091,000.00)
Source of Funding	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)	
PCAB License	IAC category of at least Medium "A" (Building and Industrial Plant)
Contractor's Construction Experience	Should have completed within the last five (5) years (1999 to present) at least two (2) projects involving rehabilitation of offices and/or buildings or projects similar in nature and complexity one of which costs not less than five million five hundred thousand pesos
Certification of Satisfactory Performance	Should be able to submit notarized affidavits of Satisfactory Performance for the declared completed similar project
Net Financial Contracting Capacity computed as 10x (Current Asset less Current Liabilities) minus (Value of all on-going contracts including awarded yet to be started)	at least Eleven Million Ninety One Thousand Pesos (P11,091,000.00)
Credit Line/Cash Deposit Certificate Req't	Pesos One Million One Hundred Nine Thousand Pesos (P1,109,000.00)
Eligibility Statement Forms	
Cost of Forms	Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
Date of Issuance	Feb. 23 to 27, 2004
Deadline of Submission	March 2, 2004
Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
Date of Issuance	March 10, 2004
Bid/Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents
Cost of Documents	Five Thousand Pesos per set (P5,000.00/set)
Date of Issuance	March 11 to 12, 2004
Pre-bid Conference	
Date and Time	March 16, 2004 10:00 AM
Venue	BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts.
Submission and Opening of Bids	
Deadline of Submission	April 13, 2004 - 10:00 a.m.

For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat – telephone no. 524-70911 local 3143.

The venue for the issuance and submission of accomplished eligibility statements and bid documents is at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor – Five Storey Building, BSP Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts., Manila, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 nn & 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

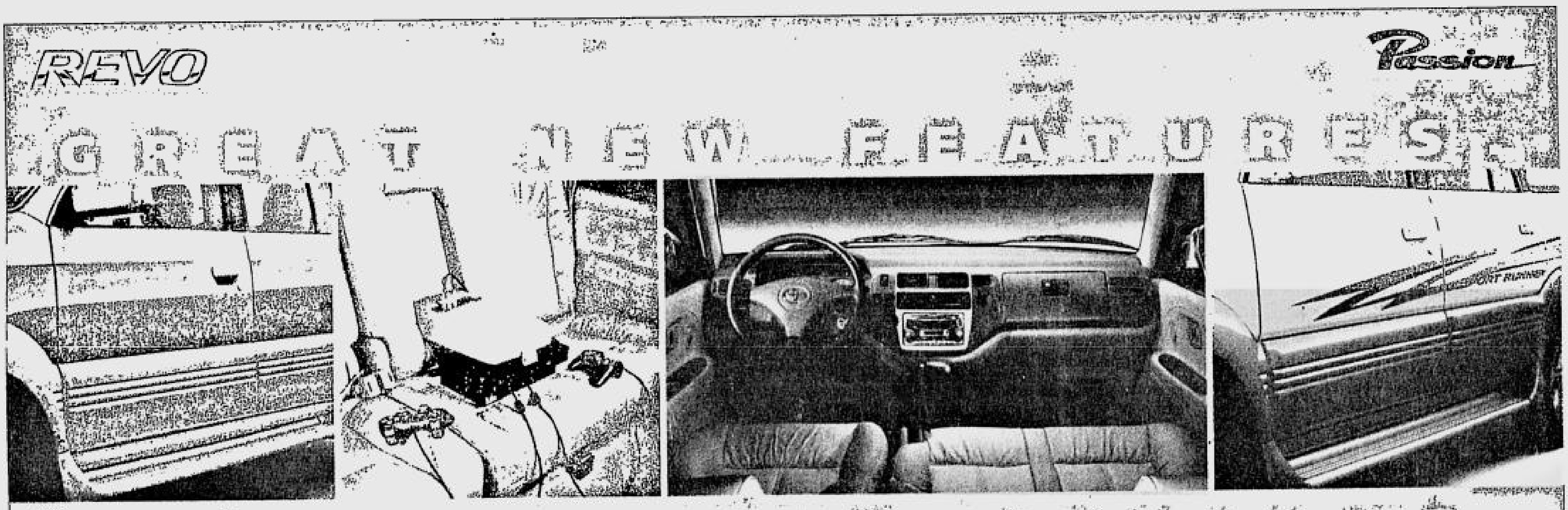
Schedule for issuance of notice of eligibility/ineligibility up to deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change

Guidelines stipulated in the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 & its implementing Rules and Regulations shall apply relative to the bidding and award of contract including its implementation

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made

(Sgd.) MARCOS J. SIONGCO, JR.
Chairman

(PDI-February 20 & 26, 2004)



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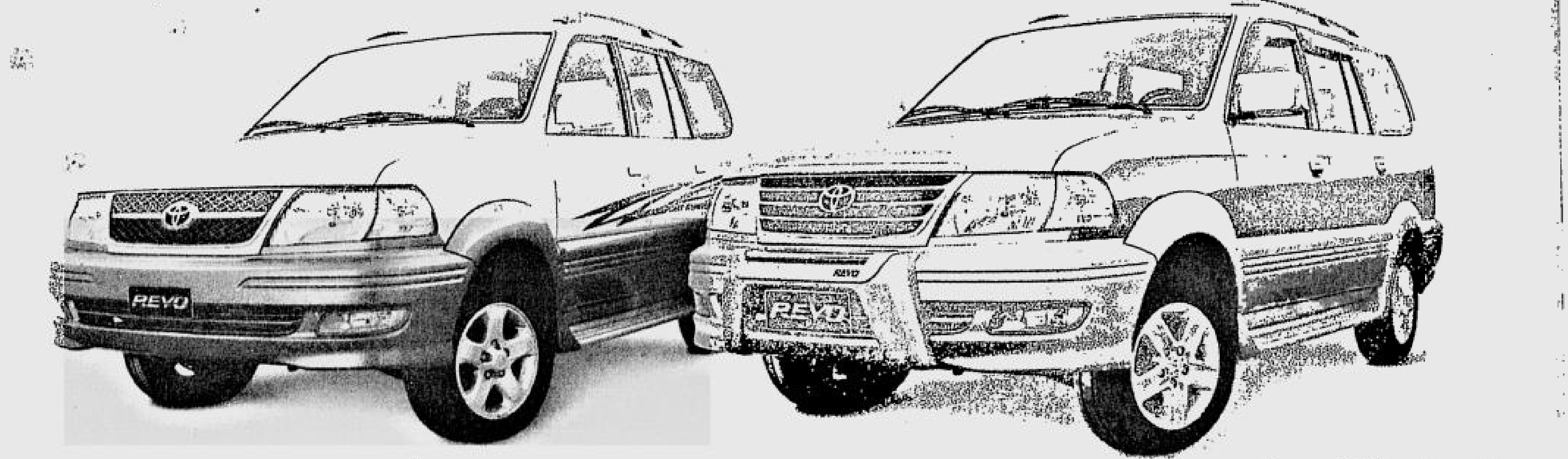

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REVO VX 200 A/T	965,000.00	193,000.00	66,621	45,866	35,426	26,091	21,272	18,110
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
GSX A/T	842,000.00	168,400.00	57,731	39,745	31,569	22,613	18,435	15,693
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
GL GAS	693,000.00	138,600.00	46,960	32,330	25,686	18,399	15,000	12,766
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
DLX DSL (50% DP)	685,000.00	342,500.00	28,542	19,149	15,227	10,907	8,892	7,561

Promo runs February 15 to March 15, 2004. Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0425 Series of 2004.
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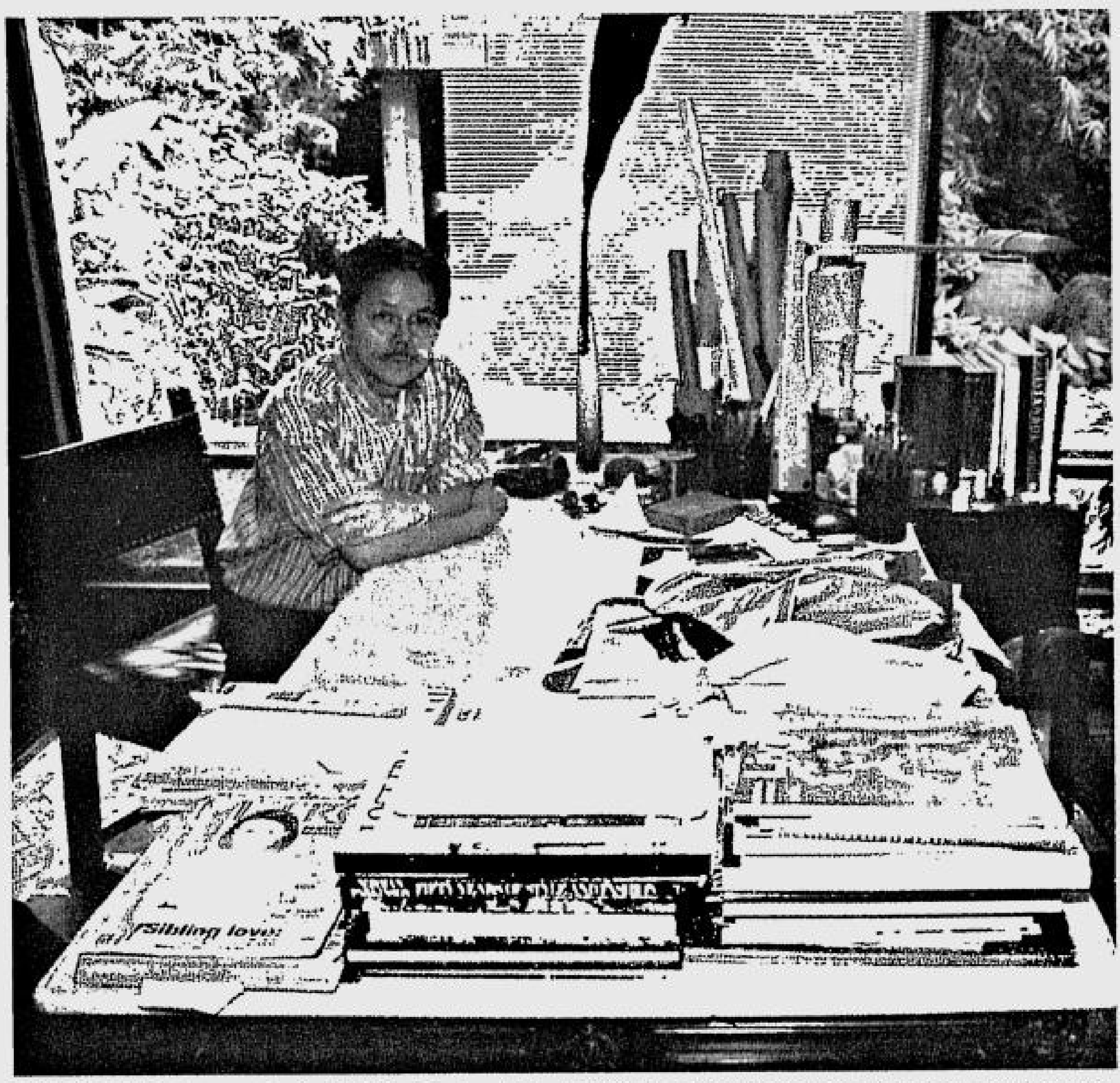
THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ● SUNDAY **SURPRISES**



JOE SALAZAR, photographed behind his designing table at his Malate atelier where he welcomed high-profile clients

Joe Salazar gave us his genuine best

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

WE had known for some time that **Joe Salazar's** bout with cancer could be a losing battle, but when the end finally came last Saturday, we still couldn't believe it. The sense of loss was acute.

His close friend **Mons Romulo Tantoco**, described to us how, bedridden and his life ebbing away, Joe finished the last wedding gown in his atelier. Last Friday, Joe had himself wheeled from his bedroom to the workshop a few steps away where his seamstresses were putting the last touches on **Michelle Santos'** gown. He was told that the bride wanted the ribbon moved to the back.

Ever the perfectionist, he studied it and instructed his staff what to put on the space where the ribbon had been. Unable to speak for some time now since cancer had ravaged his throat, he communicated nonetheless with his staff in gestures and signals they had been used to by then. Moments later, as he lay on his bed, his staff brought in the retouched gown. He nodded to let them know he was finally approving it. The gown was indeed finished, his job done.

The next day, Valentine's Day, he was gone. Michelle will be one precious bride tomorrow.

Even if we couldn't have thought otherwise, it still moved us to tears to realize how up to his last breath, Joe was a professional, a true artist.

Yet this was a named artist who wasn't encumbered by an ego. This softspoken man didn't demand. I saw this side of Joe when we staged the retrospective exhibit for him last September. Knowing that Metro magazine's logistics was modest, especially for an unplanned exhibit, he didn't ask for anything, only that the 15 gowns he had borrowed from his muses be well taken care of and the mannequins on which they hung be well laid out in the vast hall at the ELJ Communication Center. He didn't ask for a grandiose set-up.

In a meeting with our production people, he acceded to the plans. When after one meeting I prodded him to give his specifications and demands, he told me he didn't want to impose on our production staff. I had to pry out of him what he really wanted and to assure him it was all right. He didn't even ask for a special room in our office building where he could change into his barong for the opening night. Without telling me, he booked a room in a nearby hotel.

Rare quality

While I had covered Joe for many years, it was only then, when we collaborated with him, that I truly realized how self-effacing he could be—which is rare for a man of his stature, and more rare still in the intrigue-ridden, glitzy world of fashion where in some cases, ego supersedes talent.

He was not consumed by a sense of self-importance. It took some time for me to convince him to agree to his own retrospective. One fateful afternoon in his atelier-home, as we chatted and reminisced about the twists and turns of our careers, I broached the idea of a retrospective. He just grinned bashfully and dismissed the idea. So instead, I asked him if we could shoot a few of his significant gowns on mannequins.

It was during the shoot as he fixed the gowns on the mannequins that I egged him on again to have the exhibit. Again, he was hesitant because he wasn't sure, he said, if people would really come to see his past works. It took some time and more prodding, with me arguing that he must do it for the upcoming generation of design students, before he finally agreed. But perhaps only 15

JOE/ C2

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HOTLIST

Title	Artist	Keyword
The Gift	Piolo Pascual	thegift
Biglaan	6 Cycle Mind	biglaan
Sa Iyo	Sarah geronimo	saiyo
Because of You	Keith Martin/ Kyla	becauseofu
Endless Love 2 Theme	Endless Love 2	endlesslove2
Happy	Alexia	f4happy
If You Come To Me	Atomic Kitten	ifucome2me
My Immortal	Evanescence	myimmortal
Breaking Us in Two	Mandy Moore	breakinusin2
Toxic	Britney Spears	toxic
Hey Yah	Outkast	heyyah
Baby I Love You	Jennifer Lopez	babyiloveyou
Clarity	John Mayer	clarity
Where Is The Love	Black Eyed Peas	werisdlove
Bakit Pa Ba?	Jay-r	bakitpaba

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For more polytones, you can go to the myGlobe WAP site. Under What's New, click on Dload Station.
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WAP downloads are not included in the promo.

*Ms. Docot opted to get cash equivalent of car prize.

MOST REQUESTED LOVESONGS

Title	Artist	Keyword
A Penny For Your Thoughts	Tavares	apenny
Overjoyed	Stevie Wonder	overjoyed
Knocks me off my feet	Stevie Wonder	knocksmeoff
Weak	SWV	weak
Fallin	Teri Desario	fallin
Fallen	Lauren Wood	fallen
Till They Take My Heart Away	Clair Marlow	tildeytake
All My Life	America	allmylife
Love Is All That Matters	Eric Carmen	loveisall
Get Here	Oleta Adams	gethere
More Than Words	Extreme	moredanwords
Friend Of Mine	Odette Quesada	friendofmine
Be My Number Two	Joe Jackson	bemyno2
Ako'y Sayo	I-Axe	akoysayo
Don't Know What To Say	Ric Segretto	dontknow

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DESIGNERS ALL. At the opening of the Joe Salazar retrospective at ABS-CBN studio gallery, Salazar (center, in barong) is flanked by Inno Sotto, Ernest Santiago, Rusty Lopez and three generations of designers—a rare opportunity. Among them are Mike dela Rosa, Nolie Hans, Lulu Tan-Gan, Tonichi Nocom, Randy Ortiz, Vic Barba, Danny dela Cuesta, Rajo Laurel, Steve de Leon, Goulee Gorospe, Larry Leviste, Jojie Lloren, Dennis Lustico, Paul Cabral, Tippi Ocampo, JC Buendia, Dong Omaga Diaz, Lito Perez, Fanny Serrano, Toni Galang and Mich Dulce.

Joe Salazar gave us his genuine best

From page C1

pieces, he said.

Once he said yes, however, he assiduously gathered the clothes from his well-loved clients. On the eve of the exhibit, as I watched him help his seamstresses dress the mannequins, I saw how diligent and meticulous an artist he could be. He scrutinized the display, down to how the train and folds of the gowns spread out on the floor. But still that night he wondered, he told me, if the guests would really come. I had to assure him that not only the guests, but also his peers—all generations—would come for his special day.

True enough, an hour before the ribbon-cutting, his guest of honor, **Imelda Cojuangco**, was already there, standing uncomplainingly as she waited for the other guests. She was doing it for Joe, she said. And as expected, almost all the leading fashion designers showed up—three generations of them, from **Ben Farrales** to **Ernest Santiago** and **Mich Dulce**, who perhaps wasn't even born yet when Joe started his career. I will not forget the sight of all these designers posing for a photo with Joe—an idea **Ethel Timbol** came up with at the spur of the moment. It was so touching to see Joe flanked by Ernest Santiago and **Inno Sotto**, and farther down were **Rusty Lopez** and **Larrie Silva**. These were Joe's rivals and also comrades-in-arms in the battlefield of fashion. They journeyed together down the rough but rewarding road of their careers. Each one tested, yet also complemented, the other. The bond they made in their younger years isn't easy to break (Inno, who goes to daily Mass, would offer it for Joe's health).

TRIUMVIRATE CIRCA 1985. Salazar (center) with Inno Sotto (left) and Auggie Cordero at Westin Philippine Plaza (photo courtesy of Anthony Nocom)

SALAZAR with one of his models at the Metrostar Fashion show in 1999

Rivals and comrades

Late that night as he was driven home, he called me to give his thanks again and to say how happy yet incredulous he was. God had been good to him, he said.

Thank
You
COME
AGAIN

A TRUE professional, yet also self-effacing and never consumed with self-importance

As I listened to him, I was also glad yet felt a lump in my throat because deep inside me I wondered if Joe could follow this feat and finally stage a big gala of his collection. Although he seemed in the pink of health that night, his health in the ensuing months didn't sustain him. He could no longer produce new pieces for the terno exhibit the Metropolitan Museum was holding in his honor in November.

I must admit now that it was that gut feel that moved me to convince Joe to hold a retrospective as we talked that afternoon months before in his home. As he talked about his craft and the cancer he had somehow held at bay, I wondered how much longer he could be with us, and I thought that perhaps somehow something must be done so that his craft—all that he had lived and worked for would not be forgotten by present and future generations. It shouldn't be, because the art, talent and craft of a Joe Salazar belong to a heritage that gives every Filipino a sense of pride, no matter the Filipino's damaged culture.

> His art, talent and craft are a heritage that gives every Filipino pride

He told me that afternoon how a year ago, in February 2002, he discovered he had cancer. He was preparing to go to the Metro magazine's bridal show at Hotel InterContinental where his gowns along with those of other top designers would be paraded, when as he brushed his teeth, his brush accidentally poked a lump in his throat. After the show he would tell **Auggie Cordero** that the wound hurt and bled so that he would have to see the doctor the next day.

If there's a legacy Joe left us, apart from his art and talent, it is his capacity to labor away quietly. A quiet, honest work is not the vogue in this political day and age when everything rests on hype, when everything is but a media spin, when image, not substance, is what matters.

Joe gave us his genuine best—hard sweat—even as fakery and delusion are in our midst.

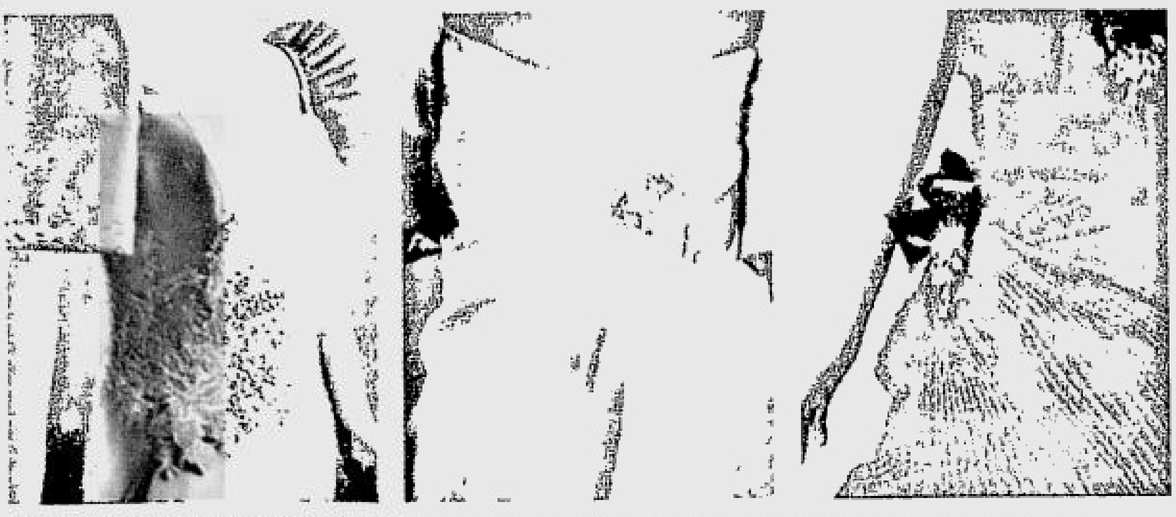
Authenticity, such as what he had, is hard to find in this era of glitz and celebrity.

In the weeks leading to his death, he saw his closest friends—among them Mrs. Cojuangco, **Ben Chan** and Mons. One by one, the three visited him. The man behind the household brand, Rusty Lopez, Joe's best friend of more than 30 years, looked in on Joe regularly. The Saturday Joe died, Rusty, inexplicably in tears, had this urge to rush to Joe's house. He arrived 20 minutes late. Joe was already gone but Rusty was still able to touch his warm body for a last goodbye.

Those of us who weren't able to bid him goodbye, we say, thank you, Joe. We will not forget.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@skyinet.net.

JOE SALAZAR...diligent meticulous and uncomplaining



DRAPING, construction, embroidery and detailing were Salazar's hallmarks, as seen in (from left) Gretchen Cojuangco's blue silk organza terno, Imelda Marcos' draped chiffon and guipure lace terno, and Lucy Torres Gomez's seven-layered fuchsia silk organza gown accented with maroon velvet ribbons.

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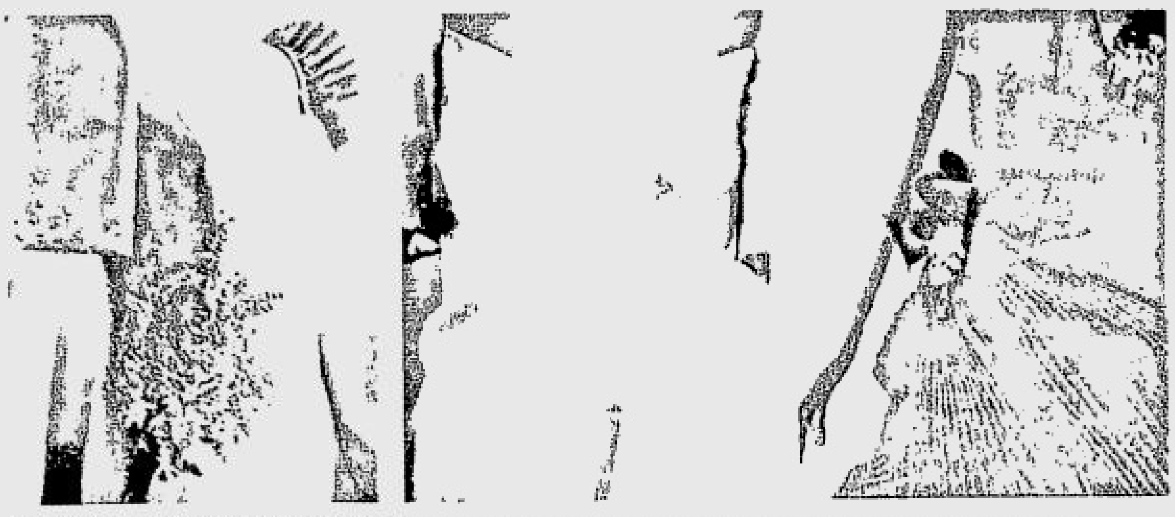

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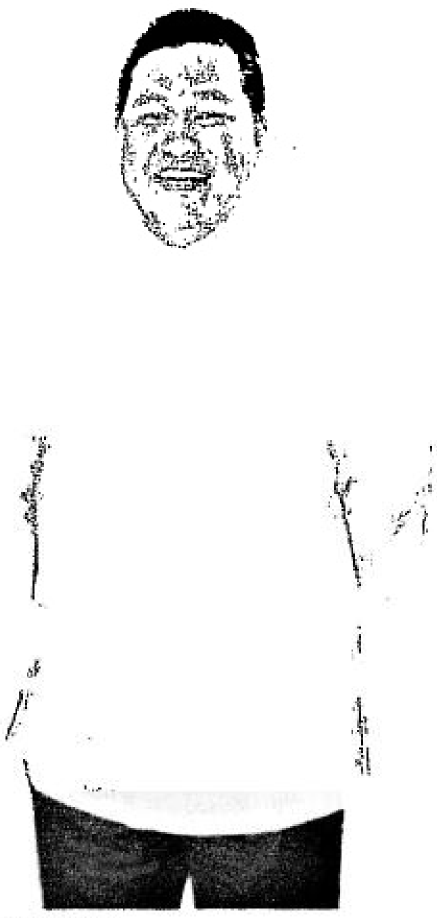
HAUTE COUTURE by Salazar worn by, among others (from left, top): Imee Marcos, Tingting Cojuango, Lucy Torres Gomez, Bea Zobel Jr., Luli Macapagal Arroyo, Angela Montenegro Arroyo, Sen. Loi Ejercito, KC Concepcion and even US President George W. Bush.

FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS Imelda Cojuangco...



...BEN Chan

...AND Mons Romulo Tantoco, all in Salazar formals at the recent Terno Ball

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COURTYARDS AT PORTOFINO BY BRITTANY UNIQUE ITALIAN-INSPIRED LIVING

Brittany Corporation's Portofino, the decidedly upscale, Italian-themed, residential and commercial enclave just a few minutes away from the Alabang Town Center, is now building on the success of its first four phases called Portofino Heights, with the next phase of the development offering courtyard residences.

With all lots in Portofino Heights sold out in less than a year, the courtyard units will enable limited numbers of other future residents to partake of a unique way of life that only a thoroughly planned, high-end community from Brittany can offer. The various phases of Portofino, located along the recently opened Las Piñas-Muntinlupa-Laguna-Cavite Link Road, is envisioned for families whose members are citizens of the world, their homes eloquent testimony to an elegant yet comfortable lifestyle.

Portofino by Brittany offers a limited number of Courtyard homes, laid out in a unique design in which each home features a courtyard within a courtyard, a first among residential communities in the country.

Portofino (Italian for "fine gateway") is one of four ongoing developments by Brittany Corporation, the pioneer in envisioning and building high-end, master-planned communities, each inspired by a distinctive theme. Living in Portofino will be evocative of the happy life in sunny Italy, where it is celebrated with exuberance every day. The original Portofino, a lovely seaport town in southern Italy with rolling, hilly terrain, a river and much greenery, is Brittany's inspiration for the multi-phase development project.

Portofino's courtyard homes are a one-of-a-kind application of the courtyard-within-a-courtyard concept, an ingenious design exclusive to Brittany. The concept involves all models each having its own courtyard, while being part of a cluster of homes configured within a bigger courtyard.

Each courtyard home, in the typical Italian fashion of such residences, revolves around a courtyard in the center, with terra cotta and stucco as well as pronounced arches and layers that bring on warm, cheerful feelings. The main foyer allows access to the rooms on the ground level through the courtyard. The windows gracing the balconies permit light from outdoors to enter, while the open space in the center of each villa affords natural cooling against tropical temperatures. Arcades supported by columns, fountains and gardens will accent the soothing view of each courtyard from the halls within. The courtyard space of each home will be perfect for entertaining company or as a private area where family members may simply relax together. Some of the courtyard residences will feature charming *casitas*, rooms on the ground level ideal for staying guests.

Reminiscent of an Italian setting, the Portofino courtyard residences will boast streets of cobblestone and adornments consisting of statues, fountains and benches.

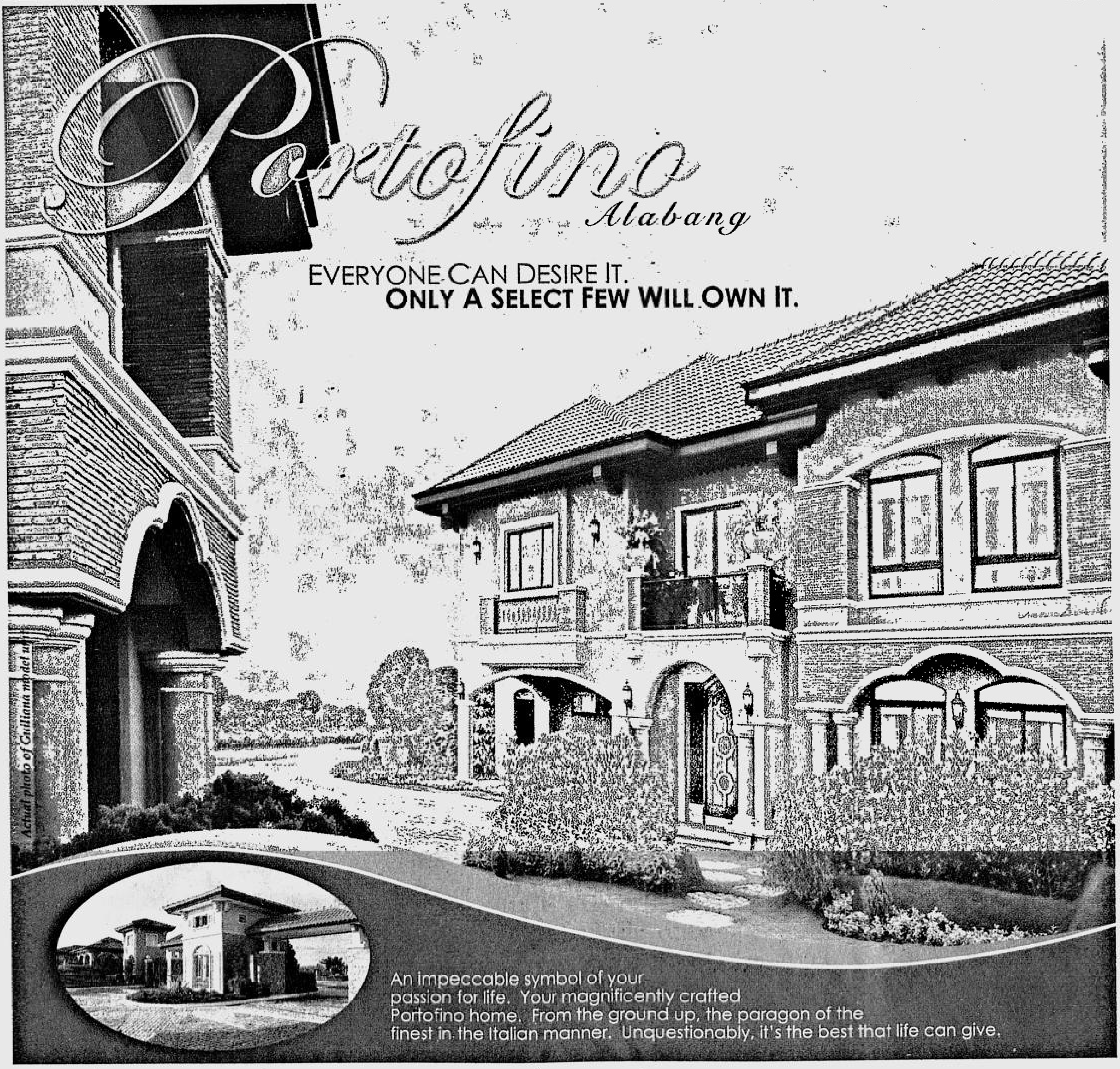
In keeping with Brittany's faithfully observed architectural and other development guidelines to maintain the integrity of each community's theme, the courtyard units at Portofino, clustered in cozy communities, are available in four models. Named after European masters, the models are the Cezanne (floor area 193 sq. m.), the Monet (floor area 233 sq. m.), the Raphael (floor area 247 sq. m.), and the Rembrandt (floor area 260 sq. m.). Selling prices range from Php 7.8 million to Php15 million for home and lot packages.

While adhering to architectural guidelines, Brittany is careful about striking a balance, not impinging on the personal preferences and tastes of residents. Like other Brittany offerings, the courtyard residences of Portofino are meant for families with discerning taste.

Each Courtyard home at Brittany's Portofino is highlighted by an inner courtyard, maximizing use of space as well as natural light and ventilation. The design is inspired by Italian homes that are structured around a courtyard, "bring the outdoors, indoors" with arcades, benches and fountains.

Each residence will be a jewel, magnificently designed and built, giving the best that life can offer to its happy owner, the lord of his very own manor and proud possessor of a fine home, indeed!

ADV'T.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ONLY A SELECT FEW WILL OWN IT.
Actual photo of Guiliana model u

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www.brittany.com.ph

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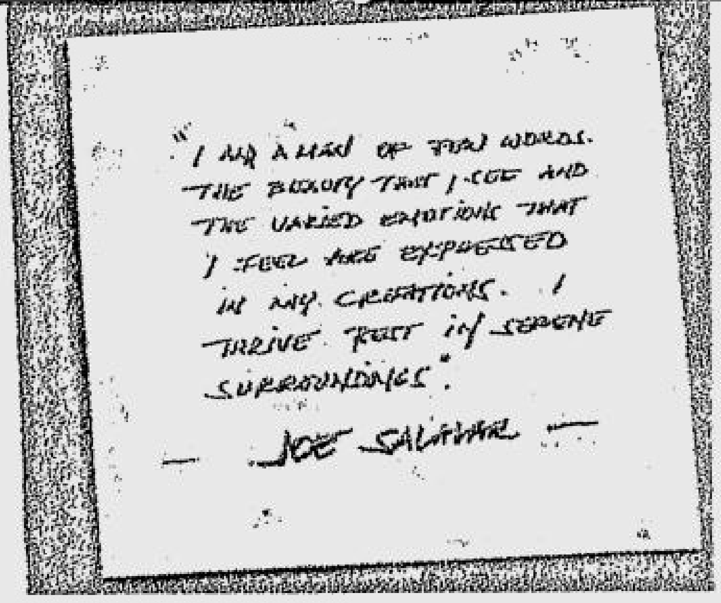

"I am a man of few words.
The beauty that I see and
the varied emotions that
I feel are expressed
in my creations. I
thrive best in serene
surroundings".
— Joe Salazar —

JOE'S designing chair gets star billing at memorial suite designed by friends. PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

So long, Joe

"MY regard for Joe Salazar as a brilliant artist and designer is only second to my regard for him as a true and dear friend."

Thus did fashion designer Inno Sotto pay tribute to the late Salazar last Wednesday after a Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio. The tribute, which was organized by The Philippine Tatler, was one of many held by Salazar's family and friends during his five-day wake.

Considered by many in the media and fashion industry as one of Salazar's chief rivals, Sotto was profuse in his praise for his contemporary. More than a competitor, he said, he considered Salazar a brother in the profession and a main source of inspiration.

"Over the last four years," said Sotto, "Joe has been hailed as the second Ramon Valera. I dare say that Joe Salazar stands on his own as a great Filipino designer."

Shoe designer Lila Almario, who started collaborating with the designer a little over four years ago, attributed Salazar's strength of character to his deep faith. He always admonished his staff, she said, to love one another.

"Isn't it a miracle that this loving and wonderful man should be born on the day we give our gifts—Christmas Day," she said, "and should die on the day of love—Valentine's Day? For it was all he really did, love us by giving us his very best gifts to his very last breath."

Former First Lady Imelda Marcos cited Salazar for making the terno "world class." The ternos he did for Marcos in the 1980s pushed the envelope in terms of draping, silhouette and the use of untried materials such as horsehair and peacock feathers.

SO LONG/ D2

DESIGNER Inno Sotto pays extemporaneous tribute to the man and his genius.

FORMER First Lady Imelda Marcos eulogizes her favorite terno designer.

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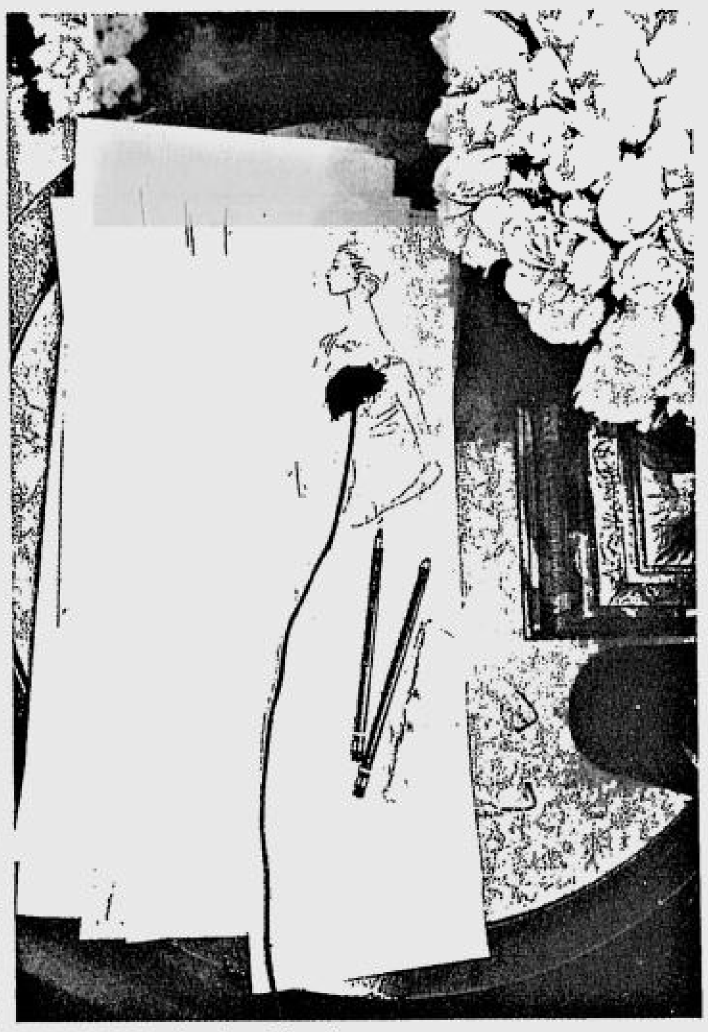
THE DESIGNER loved to be surrounded by lush plants and white flowers, so Toni Parsons, Irene Marcos-Araneta, Lulu Tinio, Cora Apacible, Bernice Romualdez-Ocampo and landscape artist Ponce Veridiano collaborated to come up with a garden setting for his wake.

PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN



SALAZAR'S final series of sketches

So long, Joe

LILA Almario and Rusty Lopez

PATRICE Ramos-Diaz and Randy Ortiz

ARIEL Lozada

From page D1

"He was an artist who was able to maximize and bring out the beauty of Philippine culture," she said. "Just by the perception [through his ternos] of how beautiful our country and our people were, it enhanced the success of my missions of bringing peace around the world."

What was planned to be a fashion industry's tribute to Salazar turned out to be more of a reunion as senior designers joined the newer names.

Ernest Santiago, Oskar Peralta, Eddie Hernandez, Goulee Gorospe, Mike de la Rosa, Larrie Silva and Rusty Lopez were there, as were Frederick Peralta, Barge Ramos, Rajo Laurel, Tonichi Nocum, Randy Ortiz, Dennis Lustico, Vic Barba, Joji Lloren, Dong Omaga-Diaz, Lulu Tan Gan, Len Nepomuceno-Guiao, Patrice Ramos-Diaz and Nono Palmos.

Fashion directors and stylists Jackie Aquino, Ariel Lozada and Michael Salientes joined Henri Calayag, Patrick Rosas, Leo Espinosa, Toto Bagamasbad and Arnel Papa, artists from the adjunct fields of hair, make-up, and accessories.

Former models who wore Salazar's clothes on the ramp and for the pages of dailies and magazines in the glory days of luncheon fashion shows showed up—Wanda Louwallien, Celine Magat Lopez, Myla Javier, Menchu Menchaca-Soriano, Desiree Verdadero-Abesamis, Azenith Briones and Merlita Antonio.

Jo Anne Bitagcol, Phoemela Barranda, Rissa Samson, Jet Rai and Junel Liwanag from the present batch of models came by for a brief goodbye.

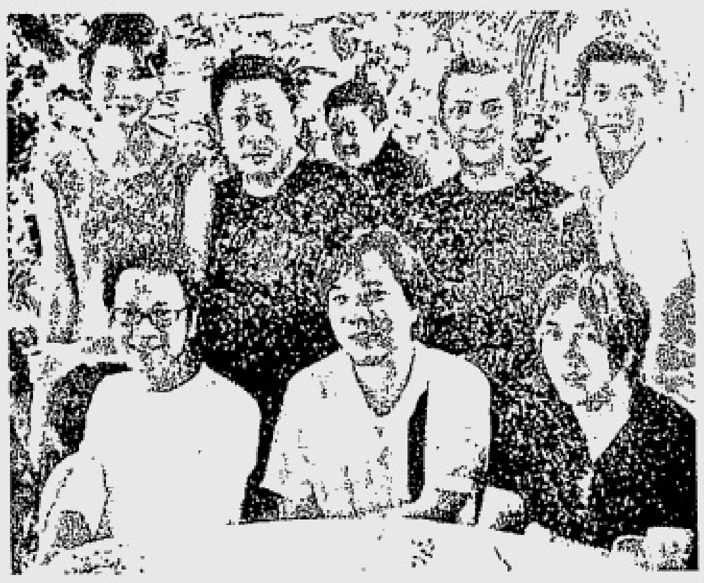
Veteran fashion designers Pitoy Moreno and Ben Farrales, one of Salazar's mentors, had attended Metro Magazine's tribute to Salazar on Day Two of the wake, as did the reclusive Auggie Cordero.

Having brought them all together, Joe Salazar with his shy smile must have enjoyed watching the scene from where he now sits beside the Grand Designer. *Alex Y. Vergara*

IT was Salazar's wish to be cremated, and this was done after a private viewing for his family at Arlington Memorial Chapels.

SALAZAR'S niece Regina Cordero and his siblings Carlos Salazar and Lulu Baltazar

TESSA Prieto-Valdes



MODEL Jo Anne Bitagcol with Frederick Peralta, Michael Salientes and Dennis Lustico; (seated) Joji Lloren, Patrick Rosas and Toto Bagamasbad

FASHION COLLEAGUES. Frederick Peralta, Tonichi Nocom, Ernest Santiago, Oskar Peralta and Rusty Lopez; (seated) Jackie Aquino, Gerry Katigbak and Henri Calayag

THREE GENERATIONS. Designers Rajo Laurel, Inno Sotto and Ernest Santiago

FORMER Miss Universe Gloria Diaz with her sisters

STILL STUNNING. Desiree Verdadero-Abesamis, Myla Javier, Wanda Louwallien and Celine Magat Lopez, all Salazar's former muses

TWO FORMER FIRST LADIES. Imelda Marcos and Sen. Loi Ejercito, for whom Salazar designed formal wear

Moisturizers with a gentle touch

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THROUGHOUT my entire scented-body-product fetish, I regrettably forgot that there were those of you who have very dry and particularly sensitive skin.

Some good friends of mine had bad experiences when they tried out my scented recommendations. So to make up for it, I asked around and tried some reasonably priced body products that are unscented and won't cause you allergies.

The good part is, you don't have to go to a doctor's office to get these products. Groceries and leading drugstores carry them.

Neutrogena Body line

This product line has been around a long time, but is overshadowed by the brand's face care products. It is very faintly scented (to avoid skin irritation) and will definitely not clash with your perfume or cologne.

Rainbath Shower Gel. Ideally used with a puff during a bath, just a squiggle of this product is all you need to get a rich lather.

The silky formula exfoliates dry dead skin gently and soothes stingy, sensitive patches. There are no back breakouts due to oily residue, either, so other skin types can use it. What it leaves is moisture, not pore-clogging oil.

The downside: Only the original formula is being sold here. Although the gel leaves no scent on your skin when washed off, some people don't like the slightly guy-cologne aroma it exudes when you lather it on.

The Sensual Body Oil Sesame Scent does not have the greasy after-feel of oil, but it has its moisturizing staying power.

Apply after a shower or bath on damp skin (not dripping wet) to areas that tend to get dry and itchy throughout the day, and the effects will last till the next bath.

I apply this on my arms and legs, which tend to get scaly. But I make sure my skin is still damp, otherwise there will be no moisture to seal in.

This is my favorite product, because it has the comfortable feel of lotion and gives my exposed areas a sexy dewy sheen and the illusion of absolute smoothness.

The sesame scent is very faint, and I can wear my favorite fragrances without any negative reaction from this one.

The Light Sesame Scent Body Lotion feels light and absorbs fast. Great for summers and for those who are not excessively dry, because it doesn't make you feel warm, greasy and sticky.

It actually feels very light, and has a pleasant smell that doesn't clash with cologne. Great for both sexes, as with other Neutrogena products, and it can also double as hand lotion.

However, it may still come up short as a moisturizer for those with very sensitive and dry skins.

Neutrogena Norwegian Formula

This line deserves special mention, because it was designed for fishermen living in sub-zero temperature in Norway, whose skin gets all cracked up, dry, and very sore due to the extreme cold.

NF Hand Cream—ideal for those with dry, chapped, rough hands, like doctors or artists who have to keep washing their hands and applying alcohol.

The product also works well for those with cracked heels because of thick calluses or dry, abused feet. There are no oil glands in these areas, and the slightest friction and extreme weather change can leave them susceptible to wounds.

When I went to Australia one winter, NF Hand Cream saved my chapped hands and feet. Constant application caused the calluses to peel off and allow new and softer skin to emerge. I even used it as a lip balm and lipstick primer.

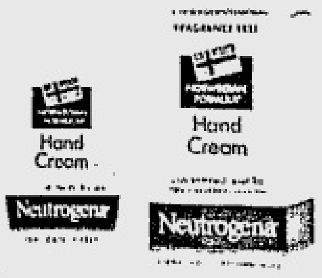
A caveat, though: People may find it too greasy for the Philippine summer. It would be ideal only as a lip balm during this period.

NF Skin Emulsion—for those who find the ordinary body lotion not hydrating enough, this is what you should use over the body oil after bathing.

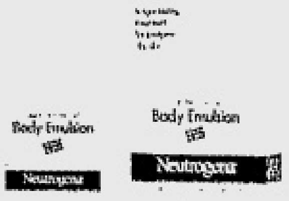
The emulsion is only for the very dry and sensitive. Redness, flaking and soreness are instantly soothed, so the product is great for cold offices and seasons.

My friends with ultra-dry skin horde this cosmetic and consider it a must-have for a comfortable sleep. The downside is, it may make you feel too warm due to its super-rich formula, so use only in air-conditioned rooms.

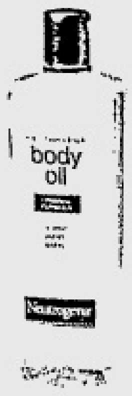
Here are some reasonably priced unscented products for those with very dry and sensitive skin



NORWEGIAN Formula Hand Cream



NORWEGIAN Formula Body Emulsion

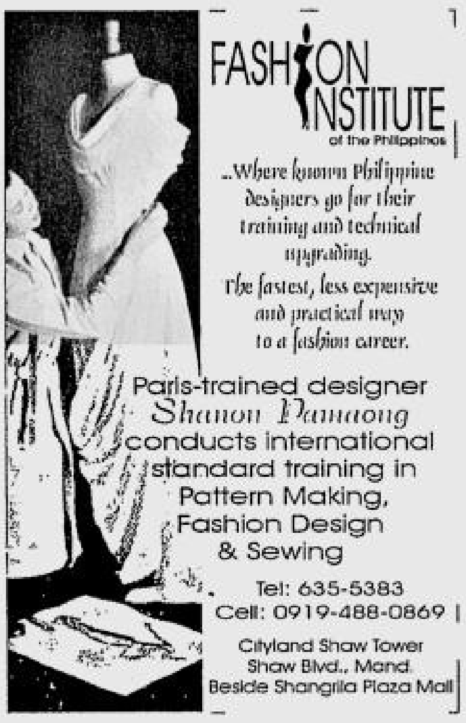


SENSUAL Body Oil

body lotion
Neutrogena

LIGHT Sesame Body Lotion

RAINBATH Shower Gel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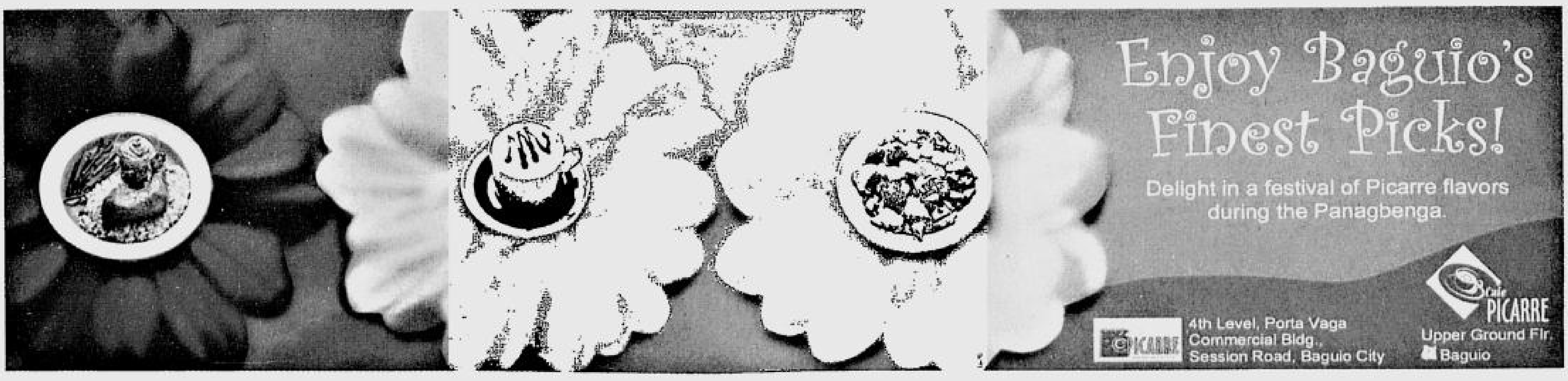
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A treasure trove, mini-card and Fanny's latest offering

MIX and match your basic pieces with Lily's exotic offerings. Turquoise brocade halter top from Lily, vintage embellished jeans from Wink by Rhett Eala

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

JADED fashionistas, shopaholics and those on the lookout for new ways to update their wardrobe will be pleasantly surprised by Lily, a hole in the wall (or nook under an escalator, to be exact) in Glorietta 4 that sells an interesting selection of tasteful pieces that are made of brocade—from tops, skirts and sandals to wristlets, totes and even journals and albums.

The delightful little shop, which offers anything oriental-inspired, is also chock-full of knickknacks such as porcelain tea sets and mugs, decorative apothecary bottles and bold bead jewelry pieces. Similar to famed Shanghai Tang where our very own Cesar Gaupo is a designer, Lily's offerings are rich in colors and textures with Old-World charm and very feminine designs.

Stylish sisters Jessica Puyat and Wendy Puyat-Hotung decided to open their boutique in June of 2003 with the hopes of offering something special and creating their own niche in an overly saturated local retail market.

"We chose brocade as our concept base because of its luxurious quality, which I learned to love when I was living in Shanghai," says Puyat-Hotung. "But the concept is always changing. If we find another special something during our travels, we will incorporate it into our concept so that we're constantly evolving as fashion and consumer needs change."

The siblings' subtly sexy designs are perfect accent pieces and quite easy to mix and match with wardrobe basics. A brocade halter-top, for example, can be worn with dark denims or a pencil-cut skirt and high-heeled metallic sandals. Or why not match a simple jersey T-shirt with a bright brocade mini-skirt and flat bejeweled sandals?

Ordinary everyday clothes can also get a much-needed update with colorful brocade sandals or bags. And if you're just not ready for any major changes, start off with an exotic brocade cardholder or address book.

AN ORDINARY top is made more special by contrasting brocade touches. Gauzy cotton blouson with brocade accents from Lily, taupe culottes from Tyler

TF's latest ventures

Meanwhile, salon habitués in the Pasig or Greenhills area need not look farther than stylist-to-the-stars Fanny Serrano's (known to one and all as TF) one-stop beauty haven at the Millennium Place along Meralco Avenue. The well-lit, 600 plus-sq-m salon offers not just the usual services for women. It also includes a day-spa, barbershop, kiddie salon and mini boutique.

This is but one of the many successful ventures of this well-loved makeup maven. His makeup line, Fanny Serrano by F21 Cosmetics, is selling like hotcakes and is according to TF, "of world-class quality but with Pinoy-pricing." The line will soon be exported to Australia and Dubai. Definitely something the beleaguered Pinoy can be proud of.

It fits in your palm

Here's more good news for the ultimate fashionista/shopaholic. Citibank recently launched the first ever Clear Visa Mini, which is surprisingly 43-percent smaller than the usual credit card so that it fits snugly in the palm of your hand. It has the same features as a regular-sized Citibank card but is definitely sleeker in design. It also has a perforated hole in the bottom left corner so cardholders can attach it to their key chains, mobile phones or if one dares, on a chain around one's neck.

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com

COMPLEMENT a brocade miniskirt with a silky top in a monochromatic hue. Nude jersey top from Mango, mini skirt from Lily

MODEL Raya Mananquil and designer Kate Torralba love their Citibank Visa mini card.

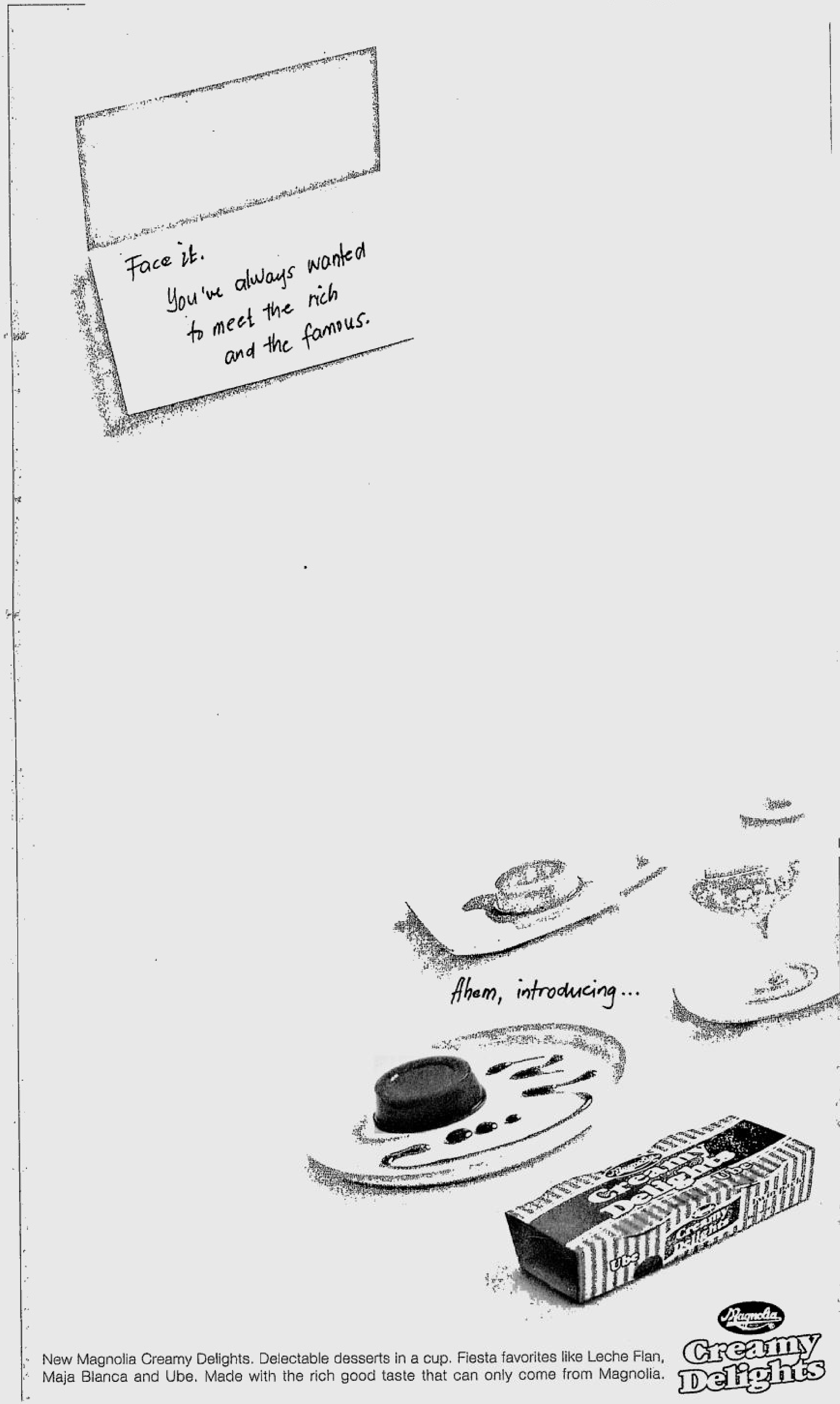
New watch line

LEATHER, steel, diamonds and passion. It's bound to be a memorable fashion moment when the sexy new cK watches take to the runway on Feb. 22, Sunday, at the Rockwell Power Plant in Makati.

The cK icons of style will present the new range of cK watches, while a special watch exhibit at the Rockwell Power Plant will showcase the new watch collection.

The first 50 guests at the special event at Rockwell will each get a free cK mobile phone leather strap. A free gift item is also available for customers who purchase a cK watch from Feb. 22-29 in any Time Depot store.

Check out the cK watch collection in Time Depot branches in Rockwell (Makati), Robinsons Place (Manila), Shangri-La Plaza Mall (Mandaluyong City) and SM North Edsa Annex.



New Magnolia Creamy Delights. Delectable desserts in a cup. Fiesta favorites like Leche Flan, Maja Blanca and Ube. Made with the rich good taste that can only come from Magnolia.

LIFESTYLE

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A HAPPY ending after two years of East-West romance. Matthew "Scott" Bannon and Beatrice "Bea" Zubiri during their wedding in San Francisco

SHE had her "little loves," so did he. But Angela Montenegro and Mikey Arroyo ended up pledged to each other for life. PATRICK UY

LOVE is in the air for Joey Santos and Vicky Belo.

FORMER lovebirds Sarah Meier and Borgy Manotoc. Now he's seeing Tina Pamintuan and she's dating Fil-Am Banjo Albano.

BECKY Garcia with her constant escort for many years, French businessman Henri Muzzarelli—until Becky found a new love

MAKING beautiful music. Singer Richard Merk and his wife, mega banker Veronica Tapia M.

Cupid's hits and misses

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

IT'S been a week past Valentine and Cupid's love arrows are still around us, *palanggas*.

So I have more of those who have found their mates, as faith dictates, whether temporarily or permanently. And some who thought "this is it," turned out to be wrong.

You have gorgeous Southern beauty **Eva Abesamis**, who is still going full speed on the love track with Southern sugar baron **Citoy Lopez**. Eva is separated from her husband, famous photographer **Patrick de Koenigswarter**. Citoy is also separated from his wife, one of Manille's renowned beauties, **Margie Reyes.**

A chance meeting at Le Soufflé, where both were having dinner in different parts of the resto with their respective friends, led to an introduction to each other by popular restaurateur **Cecille Reynoso.**

It was love at first sight for our sugar baron. After a couple of weeks of loving persuasion, they have been together to this day.

Then we have popular, super successful models, macho man **Robbie Mananquil** and his ladylove for years, beautiful **Nicollete Bell**, parting ways, calling it quits. Their sudden separation took even their closest pals by surprise.

We also have this real cool Southern belle, **Alana Montelibano**. She married too young and separated young. Now in her mid-20s, she is still looking for Mr. Right after being romantically linked to several of our town's more eligible bachelors.

Next we have this vivacious, fun woman who, after two marriages, is determined "not to marry again." "Now, I just want to love and be loved," she told *moi*.

Well, she sure is finding "love," *palanggas*, with all the young hunks she has been dating and having a real blast.

We also have the *tres* elusive popular senatorial candidate, **Mar Roxas**, who has been seriously—take note, seriously!—involved with several of Cosmo Manille's most desirable women. Yet Mr. Cupid keeps missing the bull's-eye.

In comparison, Cupid has scored perfect hits with individuals whose lifestyles are worlds apart. Perfect example is my partner in RPN 9—television host **Johnny Litton**, who can rightfully be called the original "party animal"—and his very, very low-profile wife, a one-of-a-kind lady of ladies, **Tere Rufino**. The flame of love still burns for the two of them after 47 years.

And, lastly, I have this funny, or maybe not-so-funny story about this real good-looking friend of mine. Twenty-nine years old, young, well-established junior executive whose first date with a 30-year-old lady banker he met through the Internet chat line was "a horrible, absolute disaster."

"I met her too soon, before I could establish whether we had

CUPID'S/ E4

Thank you!

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SM CITY FAIRVIEW
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JOLINA MAGDANGAL
POLYEAST RECORDS
FRI * 4PM
FAMILY MOO DAY
SAT * 4PM
AEGIS
SUN * 4PM

SM CITY MANILA
Entertainment Plaza, 5/F
LIL' HANDS KIDDY ARTS
CLUB FUN DAY
SAT * 4PM
SMARTY SUPER YOYO
SUN * 4PM

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
Activity Center
THE MONGOLS
FRI * 4PM
GARFIELD
FASHION SHOW
SAT * 4PM
MOONSTAR 88
SUN * 4PM

SM CITY BICUTAN
Entertainment Plaza, Bldg.A
TEQUILLA BAND
FRI * 4PM
UNITY
SAT * 4PM
ACOUSTIC AFTERNOON WITH ACOUZ
SUN * 4PM

SM MEGAMALL ORTIGAS
Atrium, Mega A
hp HEWLETT PACKARD
"POSITIVELY LOVE ULTIMATE SALE"
SAT * 10AM-9PM
AUBREY MILES
ALBUM TOUR
SUN * 6PM

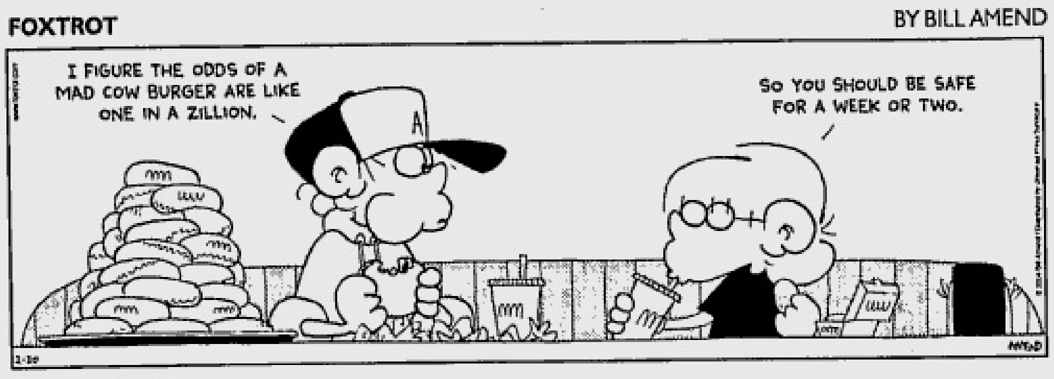
SM CITY BACOOR
Activity Center, LGF
ST. EMILENE SCHOOL
FRI * 4PM
STAR IN A MILLION
SAT * 4PM
JOLINA
ALBUM TOUR
SUN * 4PM

SM SOUTHMALL LAS PINAS
Centermall Stage, UGF
WILLIE REVILLAME
ALBUM TOUR
SAT * 4PM
BANKEE TRADING
YU-GI-OH CARD TRADING GAME
SUN * 10AM-6PM

SM CITY STA. MESA
Open Parking
NAB
FRI * 4PM
SUPER YOYO
MALL TOUR
SAT * 2PM-5PM
ACOUSTIC AFTERNOON WITH A2S
SUN * 4PM

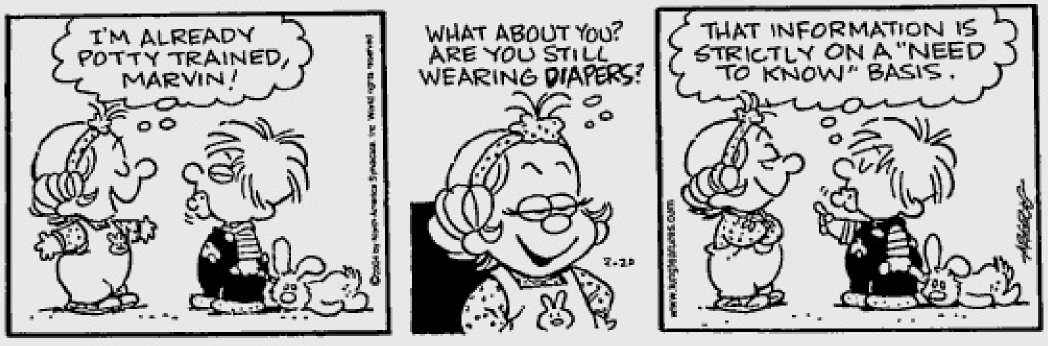
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I FIGURE THE ODDS OF A MAD COW BURGER ARE LIKE ONE IN A ZILLION.
SO YOU SHOULD BE SAFE FOR A WEEK OR TWO.

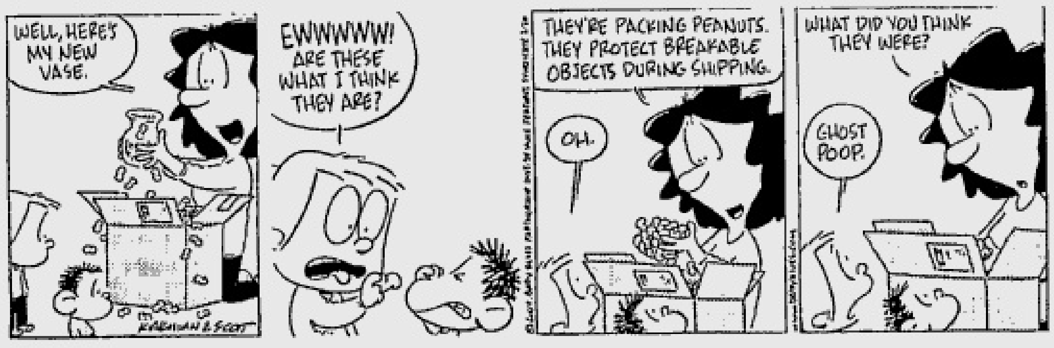
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M ALREADY POTTY TRAINED, MARVIN!
WHAT ABOUT YOU? ARE YOU STILL WEARING DIAPERS?
THAT INFORMATION IS STRICTLY ON A "NEED TO KNOW" BASIS.

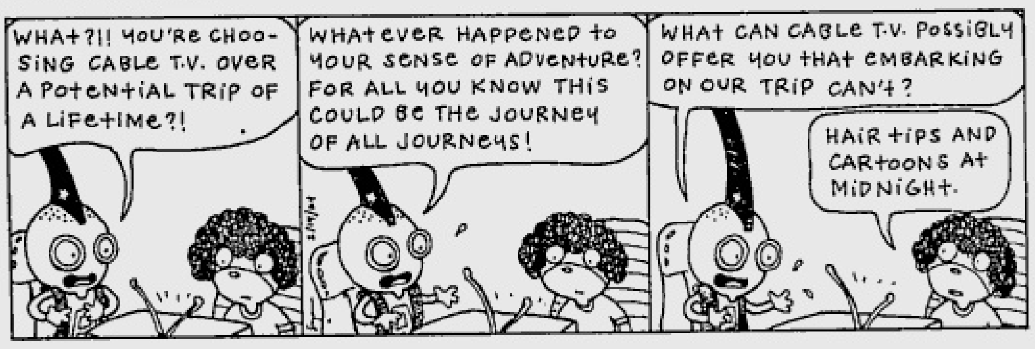
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WELL, HERE'S MY NEW VASE.
EWWWWW! ARE THESE WHAT I THINK THEY ARE?
THEY'RE PACKING PEANUTS. THEY PROTECT BREAKABLE OBJECTS DURING SHIPPING.
OH.
WHAT DID YOU THINK THEY WERE?
GHOST POOP.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT?!! YOU'RE CHOOSING CABLE T.V. OVER A POTENTIAL TRIP OF A LIFETIME?!
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE? FOR ALL YOU KNOW THIS COULD BE THE JOURNEY OF ALL JOURNEYS!
WHAT CAN CABLE T.V. POSSIBLY OFFER YOU THAT EMBARKING ON OUR TRIP CAN'T?
HAIR TIPS AND CARTOONS AT MIDNIGHT.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You easily make a strong impression on others. People remember you. You work well with others because you are very cooperative and friendly. You are also extremely perceptive. You are courageous; you intend to win. The year ahead is full of exciting new beginnings and adventures.
Birthdate of: Majandra Delfino, actress; Kelsey Grammer, actor; Sidney Poitier, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You want to convince someone to agree with you about something that you think is important. You feel you have to tell somebody something today. (Maybe you should take a deep breath first.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You are very convincing when talking to your boss, authority figures or even your parents today. When you speak, you mean what you say, and you say what you mean.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You have a strong desire to learn something today. Philosophical, political or religious subjects deeply intrigue you. You want a deeper understanding of something.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your ability to research anything is excellent today! You might want to tackle bookkeeping, accounting and financial matters. You'll find the answers you're looking for.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Discussions with partners and spouses are serious but productive today. If somebody's trying to keep a secret from you, you will find out. You want to get to the bottom of something.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You're extremely productive at work today. You'll move mountains to get what you want done. Nothing will stand in your way.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) This is a great day to play with games and puzzles. You will also enjoy reading mysteries or seeing whodunits. Secret surprises delight you now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Tackle repairs at home today, especially matters connected to bathrooms, basements, garbage and areas you might often avoid. Just roll up your sleeves and do it. You'll be glad you did.

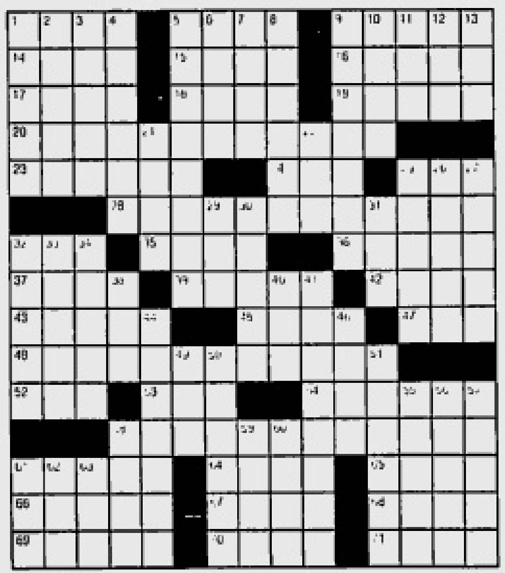
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Nobody can keep a secret from you today. It's as if you have X-ray vision. Not only that --you can spot a phony a mile away. Use this ability to size up a situation.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You have a strong urge to persuade others to go along with your moneymaking ideas today. Or perhaps you want to sell somebody something. (You might want to go easy.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You're very concerned with getting at the truth of the matter today. You can tell if somebody is not being honest with you. You just want the straight facts.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) This is a great day to seek answers to tough questions. You can ferret out the truth of something if you try hard now. Secrets are also exposed today.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Jim Page
New York, NY
2/20/04

ACROSS
1 Gray and Candler
5 Cash in Chile
9 Data display
14 Have to
15 UAE word
16 Letter-shaped girder
17 Celebes buffalo
18 Bulldogs' school
19 Cat weapons
20 Fast protest
23 Swimwear brand
24 Of the ear
25 Exclamations of surprise
28 Babe Ruth
32 __ Aviv-Jaffa
35 Coagulate
36 Erroneous
37 Cart-pulling pair
39 Brief, heated argument
42 Physical starter?
43 Startle
45 Halo
47 Ballplayer Williams
48 Assembly-line device
52 Mooncalf
53 Seine's water
54 Noxious atmosphere
58 Sunday punch
61 Pickling agent
64 Tim of "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre"
65 Actress Turner
66 Evaluates
67 Zeno of __
68 Continuously
69 Beginning
70 Strip for a pageant
71 Henri's head

DOWN
1 Oriental nursemaids
2 First light
3 Together
4 Puts on a show
5 Total salaries
6 Historical periods
7 Shaker filler
8 Titania's man
9 Anger
10 Up to it
11 Arthur or Lillie
12 Post-graduate pursuit
13 Separated couple in Miami?
21 Part of NEA
22 Skater Midori
25 Little hooter
26 Dispatch
27 Place
29 Low digit
30 Fragrance of roses
31 Singer Cooke
32 Puccini opera
33 Montreal team
34 Trotsky and Uris
38 Fall mo.
40 Slow, clumsy ship
41 City near Provo
44 Most avid
46 Came down to earth
49 Ming of the Rockets
50 Pained cries
51 Writer's block?
55 Drudge
56 "Waterloo Bridge" painter
57 In the know
58 Patella's place
59 Tropical nut tree
60 Cheers for toreadors
61 Sister's sib
62 Flowed
63 Part of TGIF

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	I	M	■	L	O	A	D	S	■	M	O	O	T
A	L	M	A	■	E	G	R	E	T	■	A	L	G	A
S	O	H	O	W	S	L	I	F	E	■	N	A	R	C
S	E	E	■	A	S	E	A	■	P	R	I	V	E	T
■	■	A	I	R	E	S	■	S	T	A	T	■	■	■
M	A	D	M	E	N	■	Z	O	O	T	S	I	M	S
A	M	E	N	S	■	A	O	N	E	■	A	T	A	T
R	E	D	O	■	S	L	O	G	S	■	R	S	T	U
A	B	U	T	■	P	A	M	S	■	B	I	T	E	R
T	A	P	S	T	E	R	S	■	T	O	O	H	O	T
■	■	■	A	H	E	M	■	T	R	I	T	E	■	■
S	T	A	Y	E	D	■	C	A	E	N	■	P	O	E
T	A	X	I	■	W	H	A	T	A	G	R	I	N	D
I	R	O	N	■	A	I	R	E	D	■	E	T	U	I
R	A	N	G	■	Y	E	A	R	S	■	P	S	S	T

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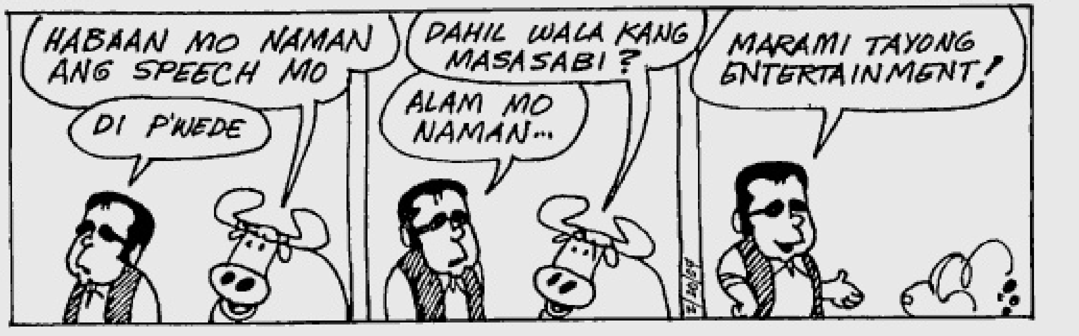
2/20/04

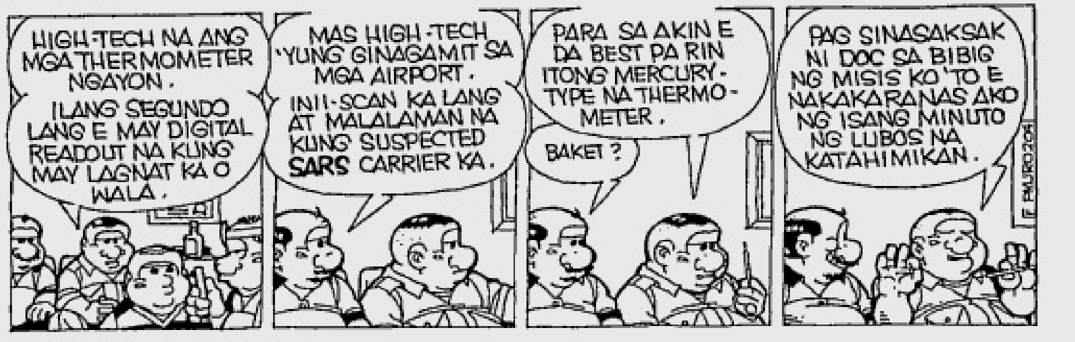
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HABAAN MO NAMAN ANG SPEECH MO
DI P'WEDE
DAHIL WALA KANG MASASABI?
ALAM MO NAMAN...
MARAMI TAYONG ENTERTAINMENT!

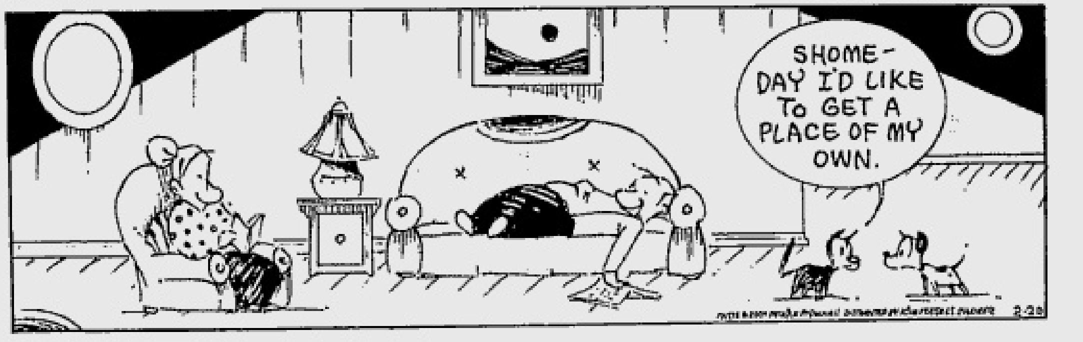
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HIGH-TECH NA ANG MGA THERMOMETER NGAYON.
ILANG SEGUNDO LANG E MAY DIGITAL READOUT NA KUNG MAY LAGNAT KA O WALA.
MAS HIGH-TECH 'YUNG GINAGAMIT SA MGA AIRPORT.
INII-SCAN KA LANG AT MALALAMAN NA KUNG SUSPECTED SARS CARRIER KA.
PARA SA AKIN E DA BEST PA RIN ITONG MERCURY-TYPE NA THERMOMETER.
BAKET?
PAG SINASAKSAK NI DOC SA BIBIG NG MISIS KO 'TO E NAKAKARANAS AKO NG ISANG MINUTO NG LUBOS NA KATAHIMIKAN.
PMJR0204

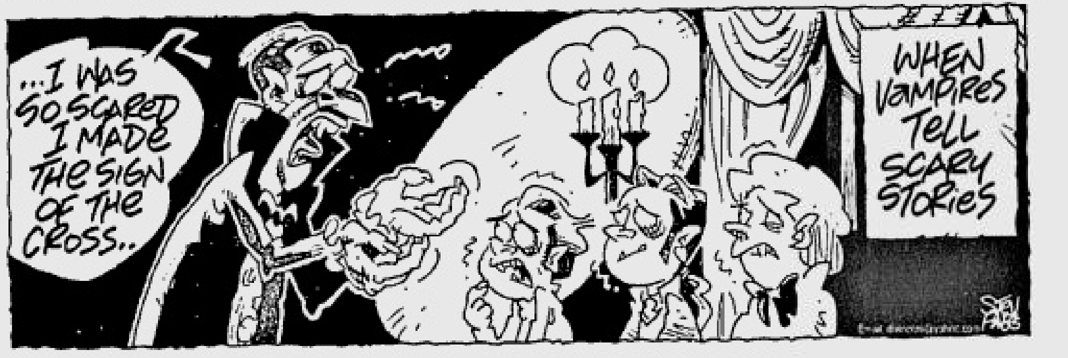
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHOME-DAY I'D LIKE TO GET A PLACE OF MY OWN.

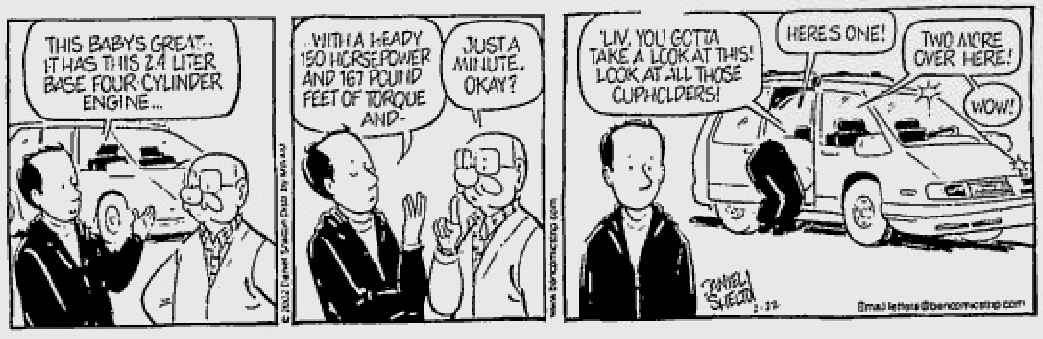
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


...I WAS SO SCARED I MADE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS..
WHEN VAMPIRES TELL SCARY STORIES

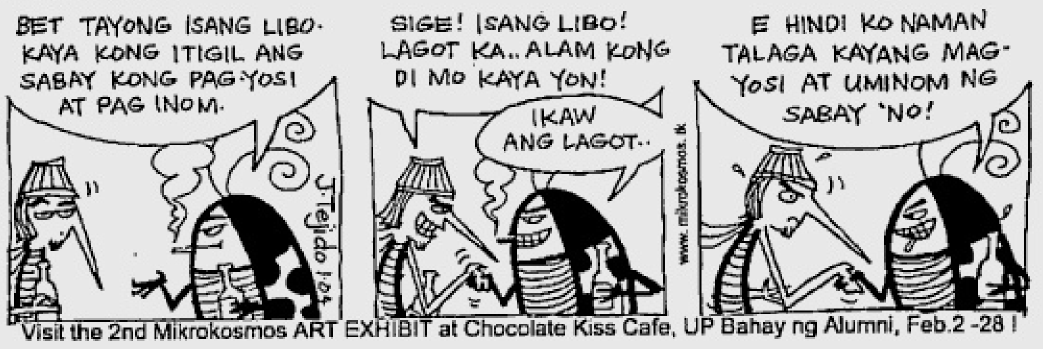
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS BABY'S GREAT.. IT HAS THIS 2.4 LITER BASE FOUR-CYLINDER ENGINE...
...WITH A HEADY 150 HORSEPOWER AND 167 POUND FEET OF TORQUE AND-
JUST A MINUTE. OKAY?
'LIV, YOU GOTTA TAKE A LOOK AT THIS! LOOK AT ALL THOSE CUPHOLDERS!
HERE'S ONE!
TWO MORE OVER HERE!
WOW!
DANIEL SHELTON
Email letters@bencomicstrip.com

MIKROKOSMOS

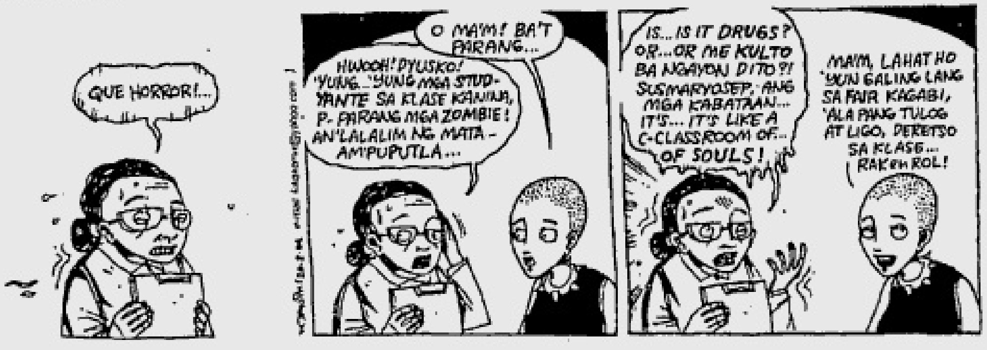
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BET TAYONG ISANG LIBO. KAYA KONG ITIGIL ANG SABAY KONG PAG-YOSI AT PAG INOM.
SIGE! ISANG LIBO! LAGOT KA.. ALAM KONG DI MO KAYA YON!
IKAW ANG LAGOT..
E HINDI KO NAMAN TALAGA KAYANG MAG-YOSI AT UMINOM NG SABAY 'NO!
J Tejido 1/04
www.mikrokosmos.tk

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 !

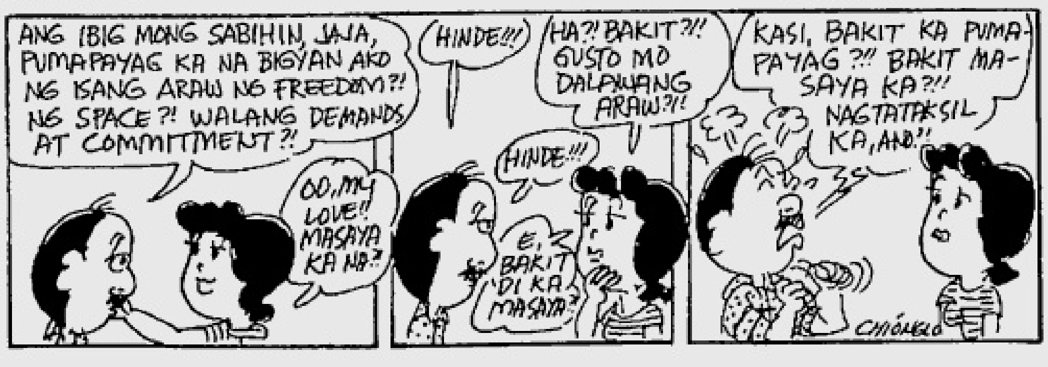
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


QUE HORROR!...
O MA'M! BA'T PARANG...
HWOOH! DYUSKO! 'YUNG..'YUNG MGA STUDYANTE SA KLASE KANINA, P..PARANG MGA ZOMBIE! AN'LALALIM NG MATA.. AN'PUPUTLA...
IS... IS IT DRUGS? OR...OR ME KULTO BA NGAYON DITO?! SUSMARYOSEP, ANG MGA KABATAAN... IT'S... IT'S LIKE A C-CLASSROOM OF.. OF SOULS!
MA'M, LAHAT HO 'YUN GALING LANG SA FAIR KAGABI, 'ALA PANG TULOG AT LIGO, DERETSO SA KLASE... RAK EN ROL!

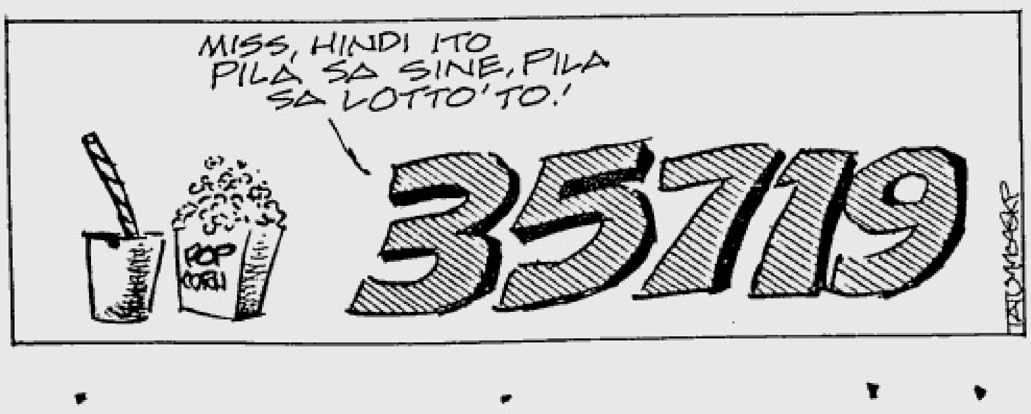
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG IBIG MONG SABIHIN, JAJA, PUMAPAYAG KA NA BIGYAN AKO NG ISANG ARAW NG FREEDOM?! NG SPACE?! WALANG DEMANDS AT COMMITMENT?!
OO, MY LOVE!! MASAYA KA NA?
HINDE!!!
HA?! BAKIT?!! GUSTO MO DALAWANG ARAW?!!
HINDE!!!
E, BAKIT 'DI KA MASAYA?
KASI, BAKIT KA PUMAPAYAG?!! BAKIT MASAYA KA?!! NAGTATAKSIL KA, ANO?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


MISS, HINDI ITO PILA SA SINE, PILA SA LOTTO 'TO!
35719
POP CORN

New household waste-management technology

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

NOT too long ago, this column mentioned the possibility of turning garbage into oil and processing human waste into sterile water for agricultural and home use. Both technologies have been tried in some countries in Asia, Central America and Africa to produce fertilizers.

They seem to be timely subjects because the main problem with human waste disposal in Metro Manila is the lack of toilets at home. This has triggered the use of walls along Manila's streets for the purpose.

A solution to this problem has been the construction of urinals along the streets (painted pink for easy identification). While the effort is appreciated, it also makes us wonder about how sanitary the facilities are. Where does the waste go? Maybe the public should be informed.

Recently a reader sent us his research paper titled "People's Attitudes and Perceptions on the Use of Human Feces and Urine for Agricultural Purposes: An Ecological Sanitation Case Study in the Philippines," which, we were informed, parallels those made abroad.

The author, Kevin Roy B. Serrona, who works at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, did his research paper on a grant from University of the Philippines.

The subject of ecological sanitation, "ecosan," may not be one to be brought up in most social conversations but, to Serrona, the gravity of environmental problems in the country today is "an opportunity to consider alternative but ecological approaches to solving sanitation problems."

Unheard of

His paper proposes use of ecosan systems like the urine-diverting toilet (e.g., urine-diverting squatting pan developed by the Swedish International Cooperation and Development Agency now used in China), although 95 percent of his respondents had not heard of it.

Urine-diverting toilets range from the very simple pans with urine catchers to those with more complicated vault-composting installations that process urine, feces and organic household residues.

Serrona's research focuses on people of Bgy. Ithan in Binangonan, Rizal, chosen because poor waste/garbage management there is a pressing problem. Also, the community is situated close to urban areas, making ecosan comparisons with other sites possible.

As a fishing community, the barangay has to deal with improper garbage disposal right into Laguna Lake, which is now greatly polluted.

Binangonan is close to Metro Manila, where the problem of sanitation is widely evident. This makes it possible to follow guidelines in an urban setting. The Rizal town also has active people's organizations able of helping the research team become integrated into the community.

Research involved interviews with over 350 heads of households regarding their views on ecological sanitation and the type of toilets they used. Of that number, 75 percent said they used porcelain toilet bowls, 18 percent said they had no toilets, and the rest replied they used either cement or plastic bowls, or gave no answer at all.

Majority of the respondents said they preferred their toilets inside their houses, while the rest found it more practical to have them outside.

Asked what was done with their human waste, majority replied they flushed it or threw it away. Only 1.7 percent used it for fertilizer. As a matter of fact, 75 percent had not heard of human waste as fertilizer at all.

Majority had not heard of anyone who had tried eating fruits and vegetables fertilized with human waste. Those who said they had eaten such food found no difference in taste.

Providing options

Serrona's paper recommends several ways to heighten people's awareness of ecological sanitation and provides 20 toilet designs to choose from, most of them practical and easy to construct. Some of the models he presents are already in use in several countries (Sweden, Norway, San Salvador, Ecuador, Yemen, India, China, to name a few).

Serrona shows each of the 20 types with their advantages and disadvantages, if any. Respondents were not presented with the 20 options since the interviews aimed mainly to gather information on their knowledge of sanitation.

Social planners, he says, merely provide the options and guidance but the final decision must rest with the people themselves.

Serrona hopes the private sector will invest in the manufacture of affordable composting toilets that local governments can buy to promote such ecosan facilities. Toilets should not be given free, he stresses, but rather sold at affordable rates to eliminate dole-out dependence.

This is one aspect of Serrona's paper that should open the eyes of decision- and lawmakers. There is need, he says, to conduct social acceptability research prior to the implementation of such project. It is important to invite community participation in the project from start to finish.

To Serrona, local knowledge is a crucial input in the development of projects like this. People are informed of the options available to them, but they make the decision and the choice.

It is, in a way, a form of people empowerment and it can be applied not only for ecosan systems but other projects where the community has a big stake and is directly involved.

Serrona may be contacted at krbserrona@yahoo.com

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

The main sanitation problem in Metro Manila is the lack of toilets at home

IKEBANA show chair Nonette Hubilla (right) and co-chair Joyce Kato

Japanese flower art exhibit

IKEBANA International-Manila Chapter 108 will hold its 37th annual exhibition Feb. 27-29 at 2/L, Grand Atrium, Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City.

Held in cooperation with the Shangri-La Plaza, the exhibit "Windows to our Heritage" aims to promote awareness of the Philippines' national heritage sites and natural and cultural treasures.

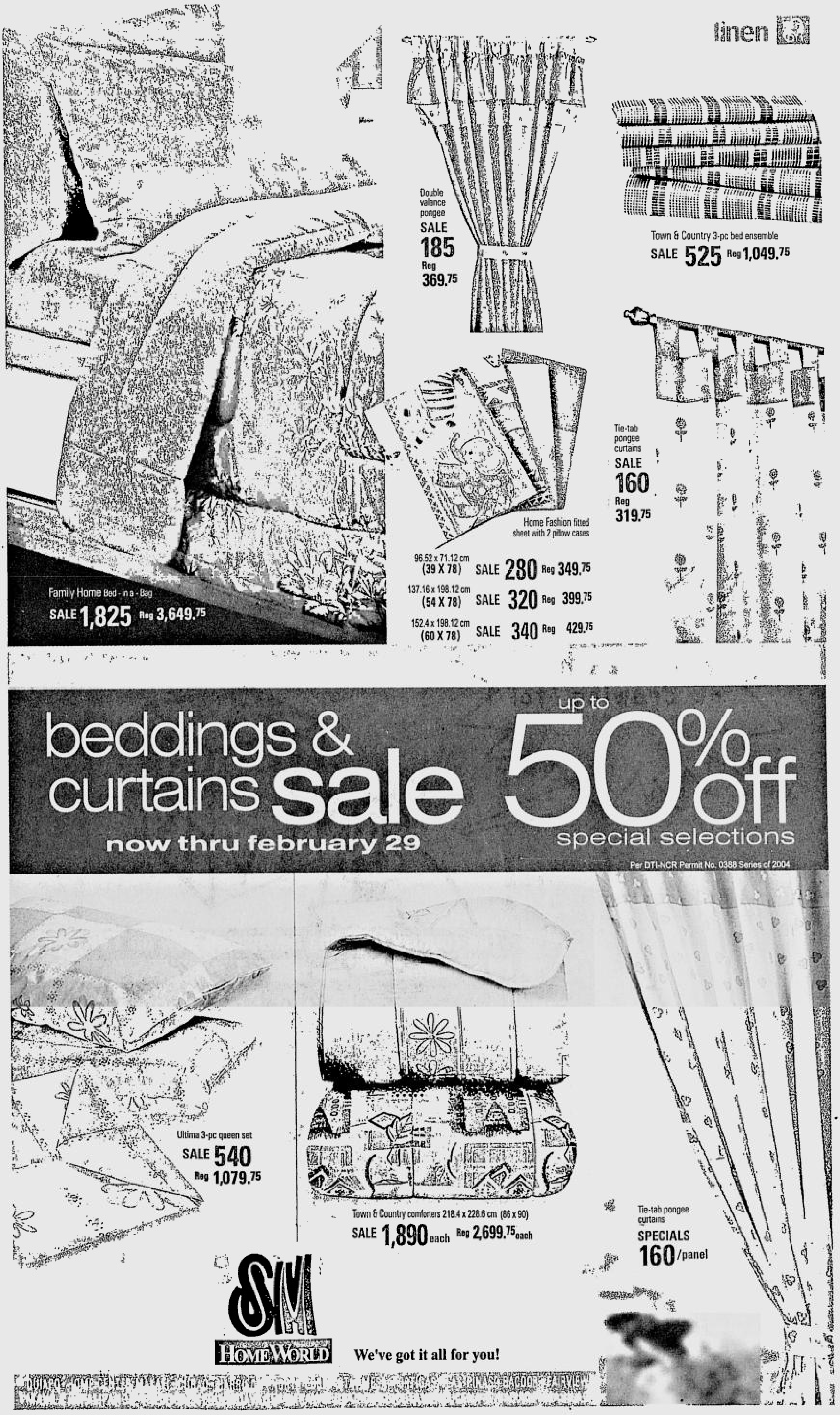
Club president Celia Guevara Lazaro, overall show chair Nonette Hubilla and co-chair Joyce Kato, said members would showcase the attractions of different regions.

Heading the different regional groups are Evangeline Cheng, Bicol; Lily Chua, Southern Tagalog; Nancy Uy, Eastern and Western Visayas; Missy Ignacio, Southern Mindanao; Serapion S. Metilla, National Capital Region; Helen Espiritu, Central Mindanao and Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao; Rose Laurel Avanceña, Central Luzon; and Amrita Mankad, Ilocos and Pangasinan.

Guests of honor, who will light the traditional *sulo* formally opening the Ikebana exhibit, are Tokiko Takano, wife of the Japanese ambassador; Rosalinda Orosa, arts and culture columnist; Augusto S. Villalon, heritage conservationist; and Lala Fojas, Shangri-La Mall manager.

Formal opening will be on Feb. 27, 3 p.m., by invitation only. The show will be open to the public on Feb. 28-29, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Lecture-demonstrations on different Ikebana schools will be held: Feb. 28, 2-2:30 p.m., Sogetsu, Sue Watabe; 4-6 p.m., Ikenobo, Metilla; 1-2:30 p.m., Ikenobo, Tim del Rosario; and 3-5 p.m., Sogetsu, Emy Dimayuga; Feb. 29, 5-6:30 p.m., Ohara, Mankad, Avanceña and Kato. Call 6310270 or 7246129.



linen

Family Home Bed - in a - Bag
SALE 1,825 Reg 3,649.75

Double valance pongee
SALE 185
Reg 369.75

Town & Country 3-pc bed ensemble
SALE 525 Reg 1,049.75

Home Fashion fitted sheet with 2 pillow cases
96.52 x 71.12 cm (39 X 78) SALE 280 Reg 349.75
137.16 x 198.12 cm (54 X 78) SALE 320 Reg 399.75
152.4 x 198.12 cm (60 X 78) SALE 340 Reg 429.75

Tie-tab pongee curtains
SALE 160
Reg 319.75

beddings & curtains sale
up to 50% off
now thru february 29
special selections
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0388 Series of 2004

Ultima 3-pc queen set
SALE 540
Reg 1,079.75

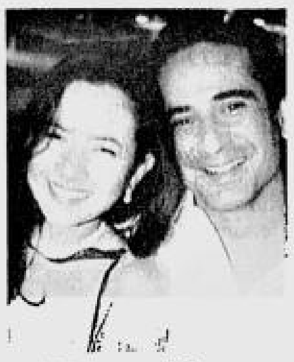
Town & Country comforters 218.4 x 228.6 cm (86 x 90)
SALE 1,890 each Reg 2,699.75 each

Tie-tab pongee curtains
SPECIALS
160/panel

SM HOME WORLD
We've got it all for you!

HAPPY couple Mikee Cojuangco and Dodot Jaworski

THIS is it, hopefully, for eye-catching twosome Cheska Litton and Michael Huang.



ONCE our town's hottest couple, now the best of friends. Mia Borromeo and Jacques Dupasquier

SUAVE French businessman Joel Journey with gorgeous Southern belle Melissa Lopez

HOW in love can you get? Duane Santos with stylish wife Mandy de la Rama S.

ON and off, but now stronger than ever. Rustan's U's Joel Tantoco and vivavious Victoria London

IT'S been a 10-year love affair for one of the heirs to the Benetton empire, Andrea Zini, and classic beauty Mai Mai Cojuangco. They're all set to say their "I dos" on June 5.

CONSTANT pair. Socialite Eva Abesamis and sugar baron Citoy Lopez

REP. Miguel Zubiri with his ladylove, young beauty Audrey Tan

MARISSA Sibal and Sammie Lim

SHARON Asanza

INTERNATIONAL jet-setter and civic-oriented gal Josephine Knox

MANNY Sibal and Carrie Lim

Cupid's hits and misses

From page F1

anything in common," he told me. "She might as well have been wearing a flashing neon sign reading 'Desperate,' above her head. Actually, I could have lent her mine [sign].

"When we met, I was about to give her a friendly kiss on the cheek when, all of a sudden, she turned around and gave me a big, passionate kiss on the lips. But that's not all. Before our date ended, she even told me she had a wax job that day. Wow, definitely got the grand prize for mismatch of the year," he said laughingly.

Ahh, yes, love will always be in the air. But don't panic and never give up hope. Go around the next corner and, who knows, dahlings, Mr. Valentine might just have him or her there, waiting for you.

Party time

Super pals and her gang from Cosmo Manille and abroad rushed to the beautifully renovated Architectural Center Club in Makati one fun Wednesday evening to celebrate another va-va-voom year of mega lady, banker and smart businesswoman, vivacious **Nympha Valencia Yatco** , formerly of Far East Bank and Trust Co. and Bank of the Philippine Islands, who now runs her own successful business.

The celebrator's pals **Dhory Alvendia**, president of Flower Club Philippines, and her fellow directors **Egay Littaua** and **Ella Enriquez** filled the Formoso Hall with imported flowers arranged especially for Nympha's bash. The calorific spread on the long buffet table was catered by Jade Vine and **Arleen Arce** of the supremely delectable Arce Ice Cream fame.

The celebrator's children, **Almond, Gino** and **Krisselle**, together with her brother Dr. **Paco Valencia** and sister **Cynthia Albano**, helped our gal welcome special invitees from Two Hearts Foundation, led by its chair, fashion plate **Vilma Valera**, with former Quezon City always-nice Mayor **Mel Mathay**.

THREE sisters. Lorna Quisumbing, Suzanne Laudico and Vilma Valera

QUEEN for a day: Nympha Yatco with her closest pal, Therese Coronel Santos, in a bordeaux silk chiffon gown with a beaded brochette on one side, by Inno Sotto

Somehow, most of our women and babes of today stood out as fresh as a pearl in a sea of safe, boring black, *palanggas*.

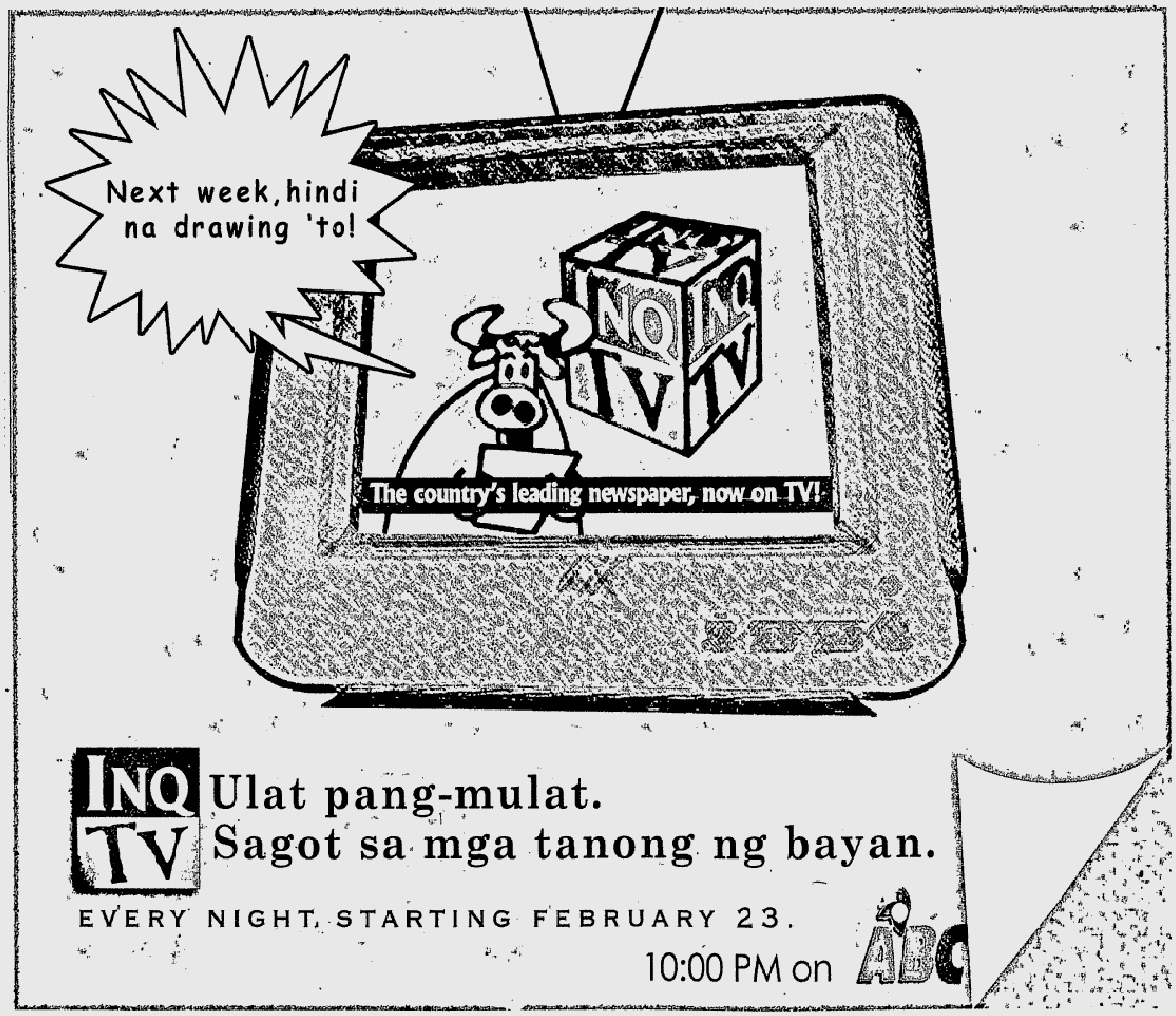
Ms Cinderella herself, hardworking socialite **Therese Coronel Santos**, who is one of the birthday gal's super pals, was not in black. Don't you just love her?

Carrie Lim of Blim's Furniture, **Bing Limjoco** of the Philippine Retailers' Association, vibrantly fun **Letty Ruiz**, tall and slim **Lorna Quisumbing**, one-of-a-kind vivacious personality **Suzanne Laudico** and **Denny Ortega** were also there.

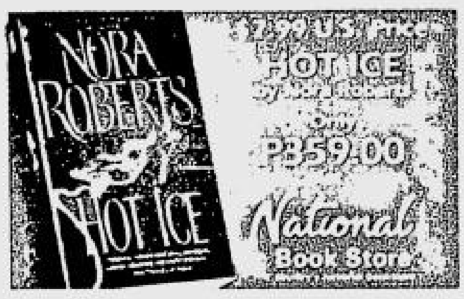
Big success

Still talking about the super successful Bulakeño Ball, *palangga*, were its president, jeweler **Berna Lomotan**, and her sister Liza; Mike and Mymia Cucueco, Beah Javier, architect **Bobby Formoso**, **Robert** and **Vicky Estacio**, **Peggy Ty** of Metrobank, **Mario Katigbak**, who is responsible for Bulgari's successful venture in the country, natch!

And our pal **Robert Castañeda**, of the popular in-demand watch TechnoMarine, was there, plus others like him, too famous to mention, *palanggas*.


Next week, hindi na drawing 'to!
INQ TV
The country's leading newspaper, now on TV!
INQ TV
Ulat pang-mulat.
Sagot sa mga tanong ng bayan.
EVERY NIGHT, STARTING FEBRUARY 23.
10:00 PM on ABC

For feedback, text us at (0918) 382-4061 or (0916) 200-1160 or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph


HOT ICE
by Nora Roberts
P359.00
National Book Store

GARDEN mums in pink, yellow and orange from Purificacion Orchids

BROMELIAD in white, and matchstick in pink and violet from Genesis

Garden blooms in mall

THE NEW Garden Center at.SM City North-Edsa located in front of the mall's main building offers must-haves for landscaping and gardening.

The 3,000-square meter Garden Center, formerly consisting of *santan* beds, now has an assortment of greens—edible and ornamental plants, flowers and shrubs. Seedlings and fertilizers are also available, as are garden accessories, furniture and lights.

Shops at the Garden Center include Genesis Flowers, Flower Box, Blooms Avenue, Harbest, Beauty Blossoms, E n R Enterprises, Purificacion Orchids and VS Orchids.

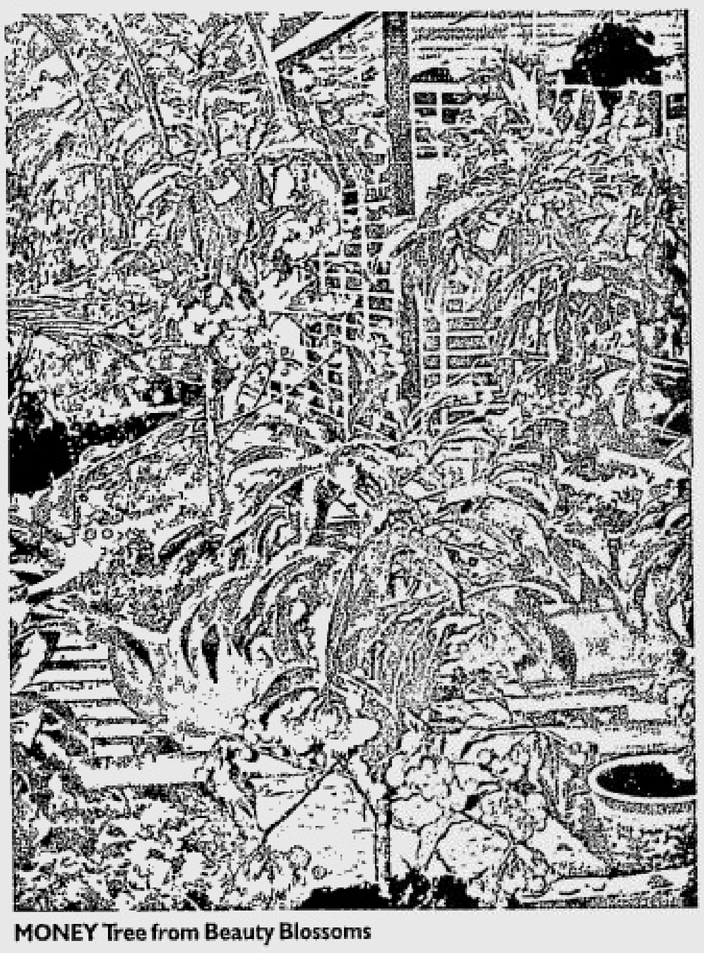
Linda Lim's Genesis specializes in ornamentals like bromeliads and orchids. E n R, ran by Erlinda Egargue and best friend Lorna Latorre, has a wide selection of dendrobiums, vandas, cattleyas, phaleonpsis orchids. It also does landscaping.

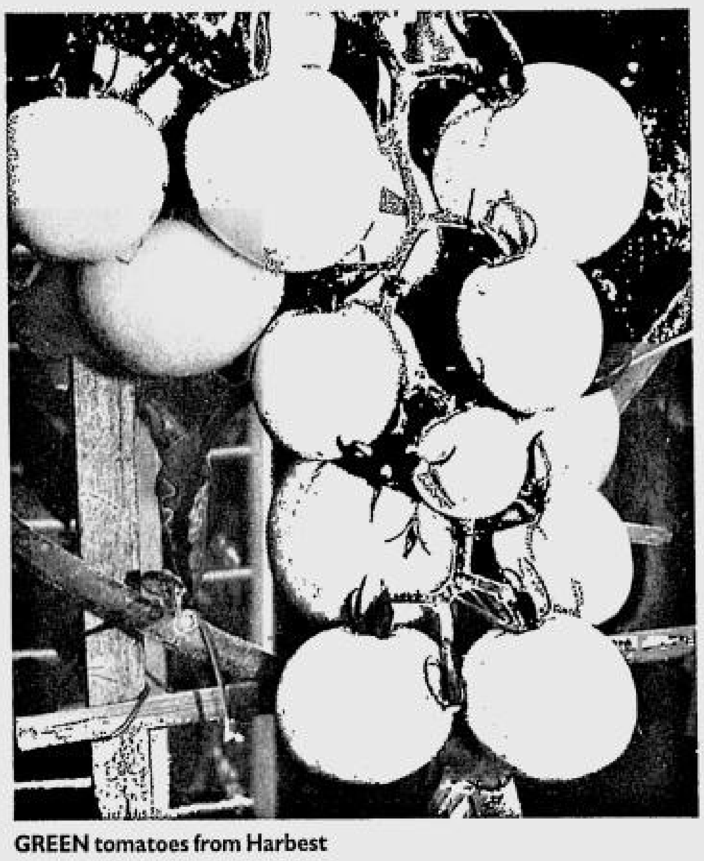
Harbest is a one-stop shop for vegetable garden needs—seeds, seedlings, pots, fertilizers, garden tools, gardening kits, books and magazines.

Flower Box, owned by Mable Chua, has a colorful display of annuals, potted chrysanthemums, petunias, vincas, marigold, sunflowers, poinsettias, and other indoor ornamental plants.

Blooms Avenue started as a hobby for Olivia Sanchez but is now a major retailer in a wide variety of plants from orchids to ornamentals. Garden furniture—usually in wood—is also available.

Opening stores soon are Ramgo, Robles Heritage, RR Plants and Planters, and King Louie. A coffee shop is also being set up.


MONEY Tree from Beauty Blossoms


GREEN tomatoes from Harbest

onstage 2nyt
MYMP
DIVO
PLS PRESENT THIS COUPON & GET 5% DISCOUNT ON CASH ONLY VALID FROM 7PM-2AM ☎ 671.3301
Cowboy Grill
LAS PIÑAS ☎ 801.7644 — FAT 16 / CRO MAGNON — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MABINI ☎ 525.1474 — POWER SURGE / PHRYGIAN — PERFECT STRENGERS OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MALATE ☎ 521.8143 — MUSIC CIRCUIT / MEN OPPOSE — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
NOVALICHES ☎ 936.9757 — BEAT BOX / HEADWORKS — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎(049)511.7268 — EMMANUELLE / KOOLJACKS/E-MAGE — OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
TIA MARIA'S
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PAGDIRIWANG
Sining at Paglikha
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
FILINVEST ALABANG

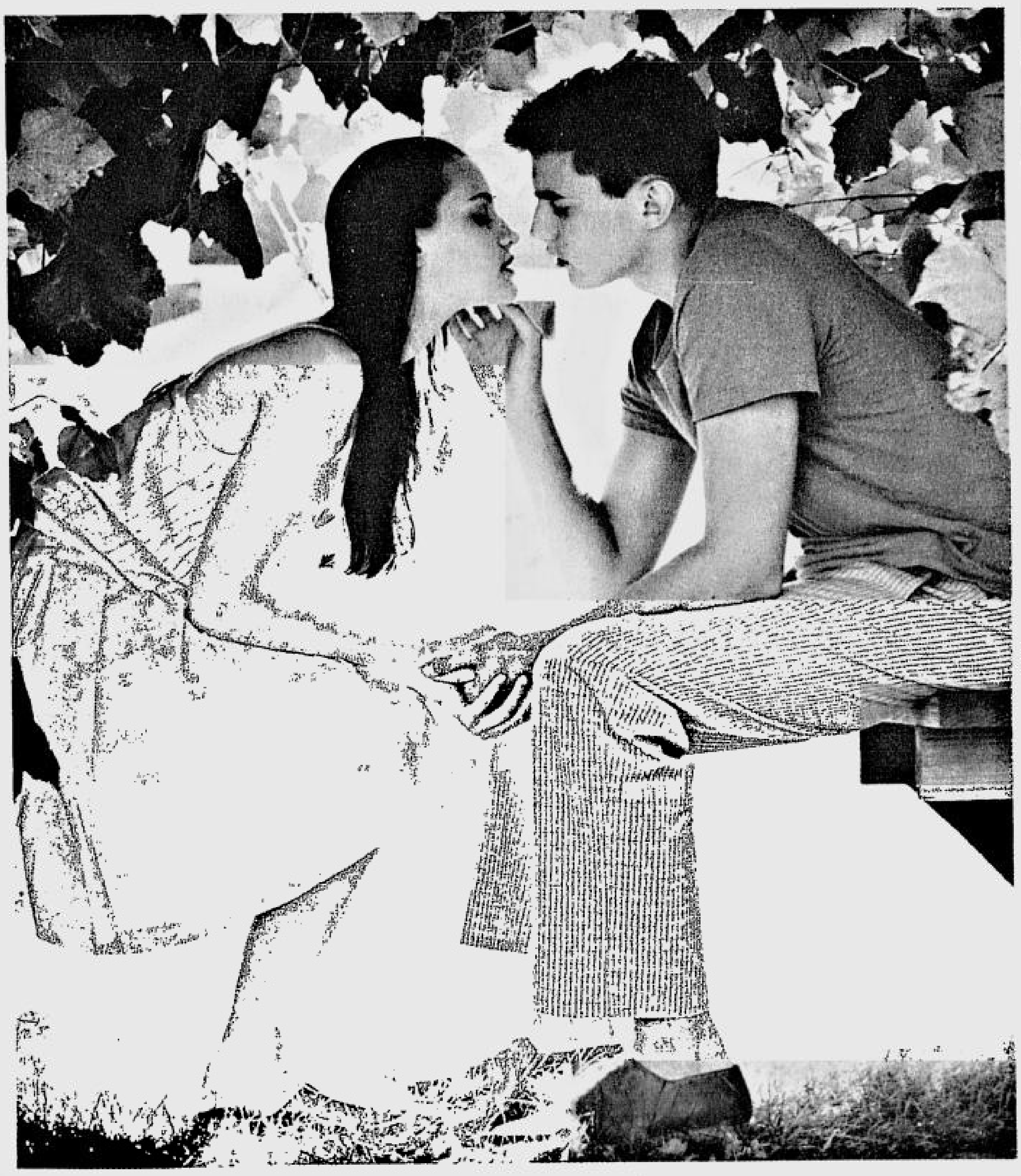
Feb 21 (Saturday)
Pagdiriwang Mindanao 3:00 TO 6:00 PM

- Tambuli Cultural Troupe of Zamboanga. Organized to revive, stimulate and sustain interest in various southern tribes, this cultural troupe brings the colors of Mindanao alive through folk music, dance and rituals.
- Talaandig of Lantapan, Bukidnon. The mimetic and occupational dances of this tribe from the highlands of Bukidnon are highlighted by the amazing circle dance known as Dugso.
- Arts and Crafts Exhibit. Talaandig mat weaving

February 22 (Sunday)
Pagdiriwang Visayas 5:00 TO 6:00 PM

- ECD Dance Company. This authentic Visayan dance group from Iloilo performs HALAD: folk dances in traditional and contemporary themes focusing on the Visayan region.
- Arts and Crafts Exhibit. Ifugao wood carving and weaving

Call Customer Service at 850-3514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com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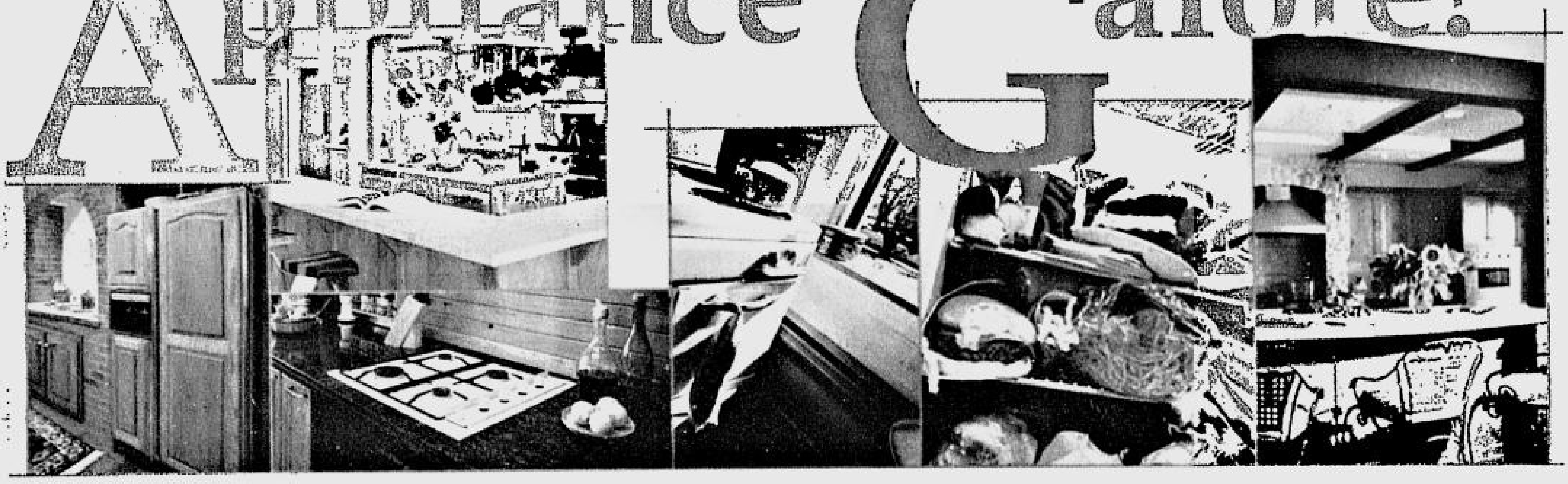

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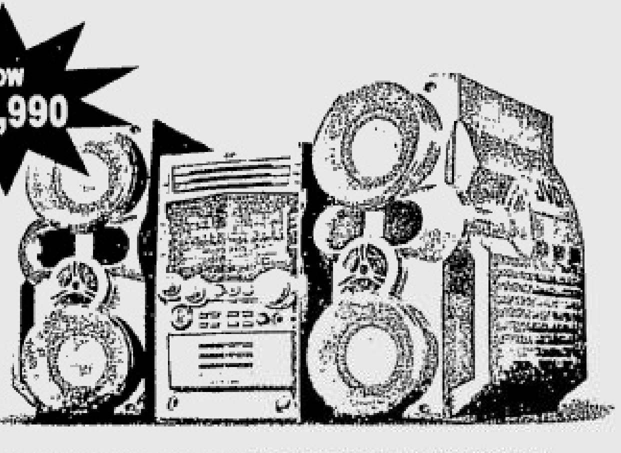

HX-Z1 COMPACT COMPO SYSTEM
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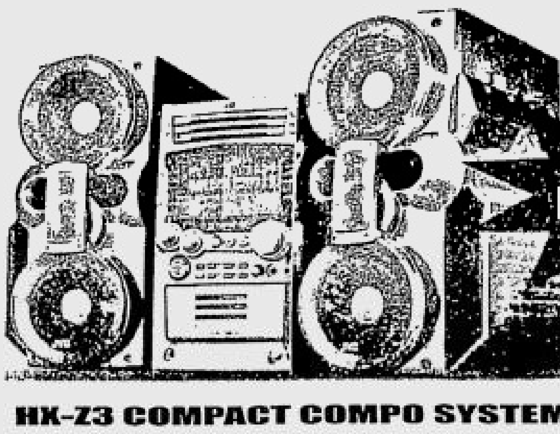

HX-Z3 COMPACT COMPO SYSTEM
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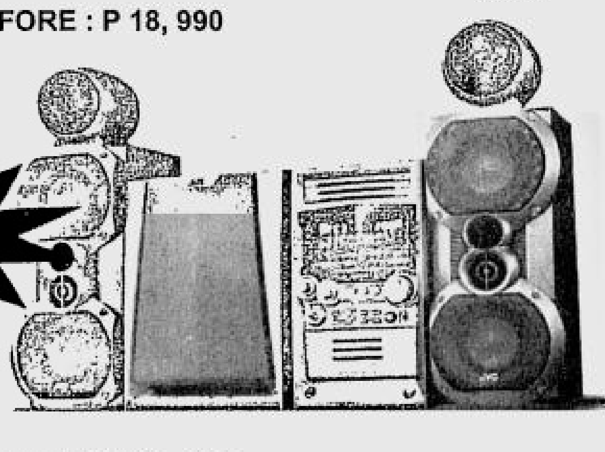

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The evolution of stone

by Normandy dela Paz

EVER since man learned how to use stone as a tool, the evolution of gadgets he has utilized goes hand in hand with his own. First came the polished stones for cutting meat; then the wooden club for hunting; with his discovery of fire, the use of certain metals as tools such as iron or steel came into being. Since then, mother necessity has given birth to a lot of inventions to try and satisfy man's unquenchable thirst to make his life easier.

Who would have thought that after Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, people today could now talk to anyone anytime and anywhere in the world with their cellphones. If Bell could travel here from the past, he would've thought that today's society has either gone mental or telepathic. He will never understand why people are talking to themselves while holding one hand in their ear.

Those of us who grew up in the 80's or much earlier, may have never guessed that we will throw away those bulky Betamax players and enjoy crystal clear movies, from the comfort of our own homes with the aid of our DVD players, or if your that well-off, your very own Home Entertainment System.

Today, appliances are popping up as fast as the instantaneous seconds they provide us with convenience. You might as well buy them now and enjoy these contraptions before they become obsolete.

You see, the fun in buying these things are the little glitches in them that have not been perfected yet. You ask, "Where's the fun in that?". Here's an example: if you grew up listening to vinyl records, you surely miss the crackle and pop that you hear from listening to a turntable, which CD players now do not have with its crisp and near-perfect digital sound. Or the simplicity of games being offered by an Atari or Nintendo Family Computer. One feels a sense of accomplishment when he completes the stage to Pac-Man or Mrs. Pac-Man for the girls (actually it's just Pac-Man wearing a bow on his head). Of course, there's no denying the 'joygasm' you get from playing the Playstation, X-Box etc. today, but face it, games from back then are not that hard to crack which provides instant gratification.

Later on, these 22nd century appliances will be relics as well, and you will tell your children how easy it is to play the X-box or Playstation, or how you miss the imperfections you hear from playing a CD player. These imperfections which we try to get rid off are also the imperfections that we miss when a new appliance is introduced to the market.

So buy an appliance which you don't have right now, because it's the funny and memorable experiences we had with these devices that will help define our nostalgic moments later on in life.

> Today, appliances are popping up as fast as the instantaneous seconds they provide us with convenience. You might as well buy them now and enjoy these contraptions before they become obsolete.

Homeowners cautioned on indoor environment

ENVIRONMENTAL engineers urge homeowners to pay attention to the quality of air inside the homes and to take seriously the often taken for granted aspect of indoor environment.

Studies in the US show indoor air is 2.5 times more polluted than outdoor air. Quoting a US Environment Protection Agency report, an environmental engineer from the University of the Philippines said indoor pollution rate may even be higher since 80 to 90 percent of air indoor is circulated and may bring all sorts of micro-particles that may cause discomfort and health problems. This becomes more so since, according to a World Health Organization report, people spend 91 percent of their time indoors. This poses a problem, especially to young children whose lungs are still growing and their respiratory system narrower.

Unhealthy indoor environment also brings about unseen enemies. In the comfort of the home, in the privacy of the bedroom, millions of dust mites share the space. Dust mites are very tiny micro-organisms that live in dust and invisible to human eyes. They live in beddings, couches, carpets, stuff toys, curtains and bedsheets. They feed on dead skin that which falls off human bodies of that of animals and any organic material they find.

Dust mites share the home but only people who are allergic to them feel the effects or are bothered by them unless the home enjoys the blessings of an air-conditioning system that effectively deals with indoor pollutants.

Uni-Air Philippines Inc, an exponent of pollution-free air whose concept is providing clean air for healthy living, says not only an air conditioner must be a mere cooling device but must be a able to filter the air and make it safe to inhale.

UPI distributes split-type aircon with multi-point filter. It attracts like magic and traps large particles of airborne pollutants. Multi-point filter absorbs moldiness germs up to 0.01 microns, cigarette smoke and wastes into the needle-electrified area with the use of high voltage electricity. It also has the anti-bacteria filter also known as photocalytic whose composition is titanium dioxide (Ti02). It produces a chemical reaction when a direct light irradiates the Ti02. Results of Japanese laboratory tests show anti-bacteria filter is 99 percent effective in combating indoor germs and viruses.

UPI also distributes the window-type aircon-purifier with three-stage purification process that traps large particles of dust. The company also has different models of air purifiers with six stages of purification system. The system removes airborne micro-organisms such as fungal spores, parasites, bacteria, airborne allergens, toxic fumes, and gases.

The star home entertainment experience

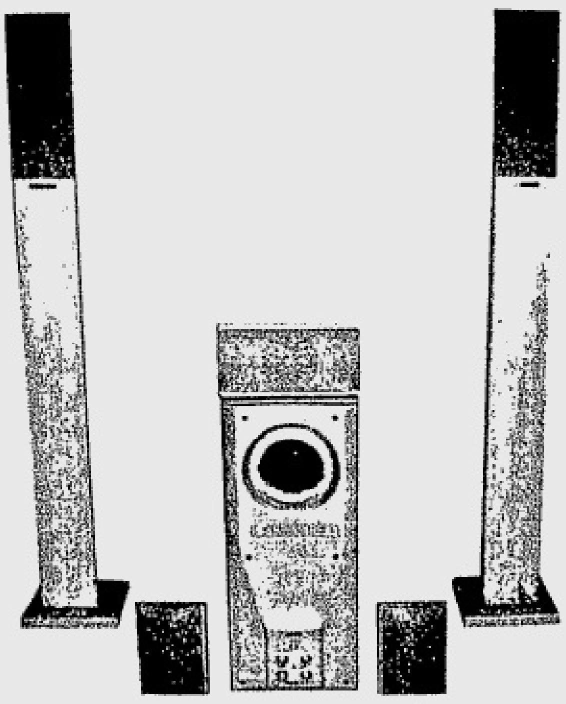
STAYING home, taking care of the wife and the kids, sitting back and savoring the fruits of hard-earned success, this relaxing ambiance is normal to Aga Muhlach, Philippine cinema's box-office king. For Aga, the only privacy he can enjoy is in the comfort of his own home. An avowed video and audiophile, he often spends his free time enjoying watching movies and listening to music. Yet despite his celebrity status, he has kept a classic, simple lifestyle devoid of excess luxury. That's why he enjoys the company of his Promac Home Entertainment System. From the flat screen TV, 5.1 speaker system and DVD player, the all-digital Promac Home Entertainment System proves itself to be the sensible choice with its high quality product rating at an amazingly affordable price.

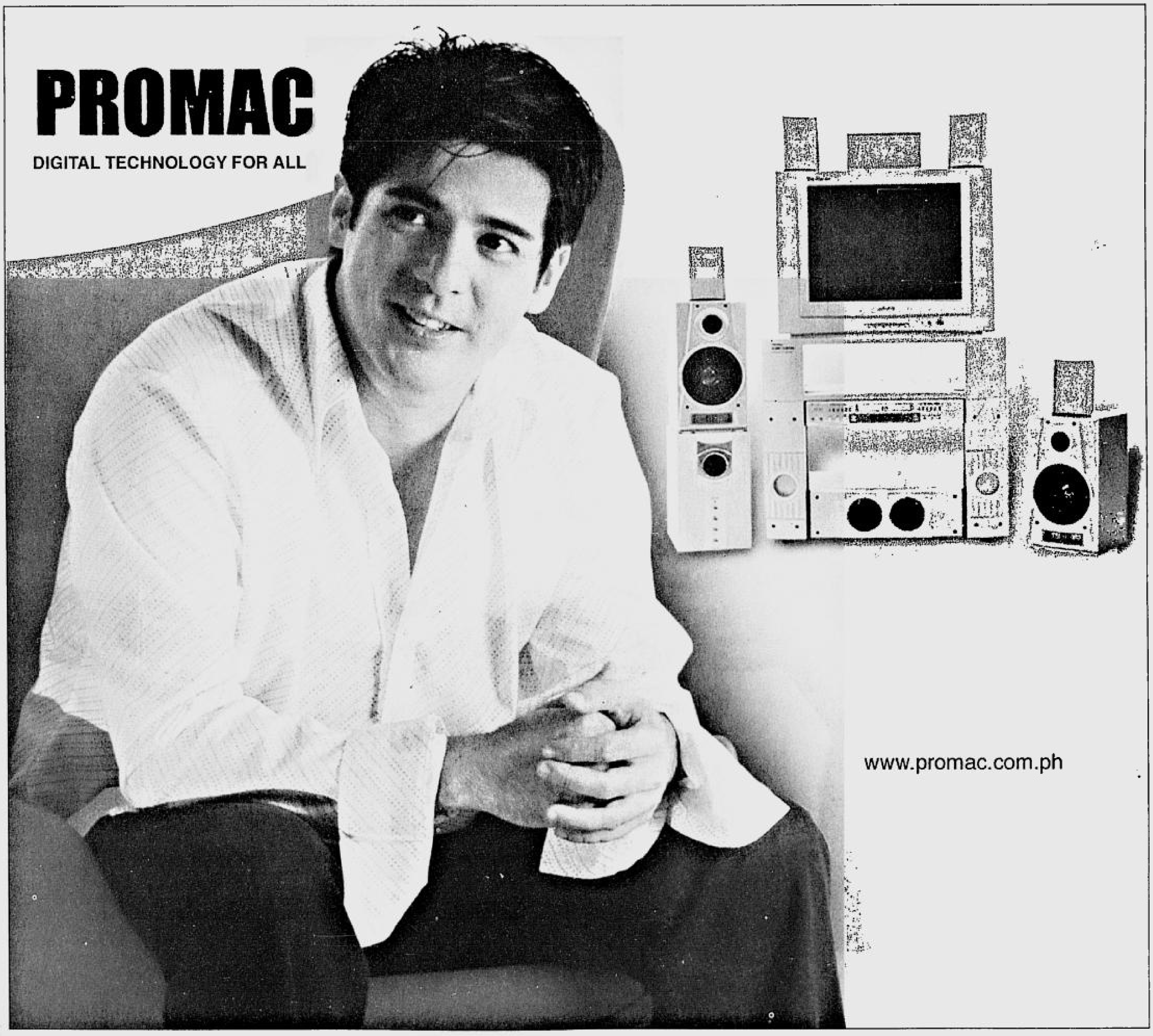
A 21" TV will most likely cost the average individual around 2 months salary. But for the same amount, one can have a complete home entertainment system - TV, speaker system and DVD player. How? Easy. It starts with the Promac Cinemac 29" color TV that delivers clear and crisp images thanks to its semi-flat color screen. With 181 cable ready channels and audio-video features, it's like having a personal mini theater. The fun continues with the Promac Subwoofer Pro 5.1T, boasting of an 18-watt RMS subwoofer, two satellite speakers and two tower speakers with a total power output of 380 watts. With such awesome features, expect yourself to get into a rhythm as you experience the finest in home theater acoustics.

Then it gets more exciting. Transform your home into the ultimate party place with the MIDI player with the most - the Promac MVD-Caraoke Jukebox. Sing to your heart's content with its high-memory karaoke containing more than 10,000 songs. Elevate your performance level to new heights as this fantastic digital device can play all your favorite VCD, CD and MP3 discs. With its free music book and automatic scoring features, the Promac MVD-Caraoke Jukebox makes you feel like the ultimate home concert artist.

As Aga would attest, quality time at home with your loved ones is made more relaxed and comfortable as you indulge in the breakthrough digital features of the Promac Home Entertainment System. As they say, home is where the heart is and Promac makes sure that you get the best of everything because you deserve it.

PROMAC
MIDI PLAYER
VCD
MVD
MP3
disc
Karaoke
MVD-Caraoke
Jukebox
10,000 Songs
COMPATIBLE WITH
VCD, CD & MP3 DISC





Italy's latest now in the Philippines

PICTURE this in your kitchen: you're preparing a sumptuous white pasta sauce, letting it simmer using your new bi-power 5 kw burner. Beside it, you're cooking your secret fish recipe using the cooktop's double-face fish burner. A few feet away, the chocolate souffle is just about ready, thanks to the stainless steel oven's 7-chef multifunction feature. All this while chatting with your guests who can't help but admire not just your cooking skills but your stunning kitchen as well.

With Ariston's latest collection straight from Italy, yes, it can happen.

2004 Collection

Launched just late last year in Italy, the 2004 Ariston collection is now available to Filipino homemakers with a particular taste for Italian design and the latest cooking technology.

Aside from the 5kw bi-power burner innovation that lets one regulate power by turning on the 2 rings independently, Ariston also now offers the new Induction ceramic cook-tops. Its ceramic surface conducts heat only through metal. You can touch the active heating zone and not get burned - a big safety plus!

Other Ariston exclusives include the widely-welcomed anti-scratch stainless surface, and the multi-function cook tops offering various combinations of burner types such as vittroceramic, fish-burners, bi-power and triple-ring burners - you name it. For serious domestic chefs (and wannabes), the X-line Professional Series Cooktops with five high-power burners and heavy-duty cast iron pan support is a must. Of course, the kitchen wouldn't be complete without the latest Ariston hood designs that offer the highest suction capacities of up to 900 cum/hr. The result, a fresh looking and fresh-smelling kitchen.

#1 Italian Brand

No wonder then that Ariston's manufacturer, Merloni Elettrodomestici, remains the number one appliance manufacturer in Italy. The latest GfK and Nielsen research results released in Italy reveal that Merloni continues to dominate the market with an average of close to 30 percent share across all appliance segments (built-in cooktops, ovens, dishwashers, washing machines and refrigerators). Merloni is the 2nd largest company in Italy next only to the FIAT-Alitalia group. It is a publicly-listed company in the Milan Stock Exchange.

Merloni boasts of state-of-the-art robotics in its manufacturing plants in Italy. These programmed machines can produce 1 item every ten seconds using only one structure for any category. These are the very same products that reach the very demanding and selective Filipino homemaker. In the Philippines, Ariston offers its customers an unequalled 3-year warranty on parts and service - a testament to its confidence in the quality of its products.

3 New Showrooms

With its new products straight out of Italy, Ariston's exclusive distributor, Fabriano Spa, has likewise expanded with three new showrooms that soft-launched late last year. In addition to its main showrooms in Shangri-La and Megamall, Fabriano expanded in the accessible, high profile areas of Glorietta 4; MC Home Depot Fort Bonifacio and Cybermall in Eastwood City. One simply has to visit and she will surely find the Ariston of her choice. Call or visit the Ariston showrooms on the 4th level of Shangri-La Plaza (tel.631-8282), 5th level Bldg. B SM Megamall (tel.633-9953), Glorietta Mall, Glorietta 4 (tel.no.887-0075), Cybermall Eastwood City Libis ((tel.687-1566) or at the MC Home Depot Fort Bonifacio (tel.815-8875).

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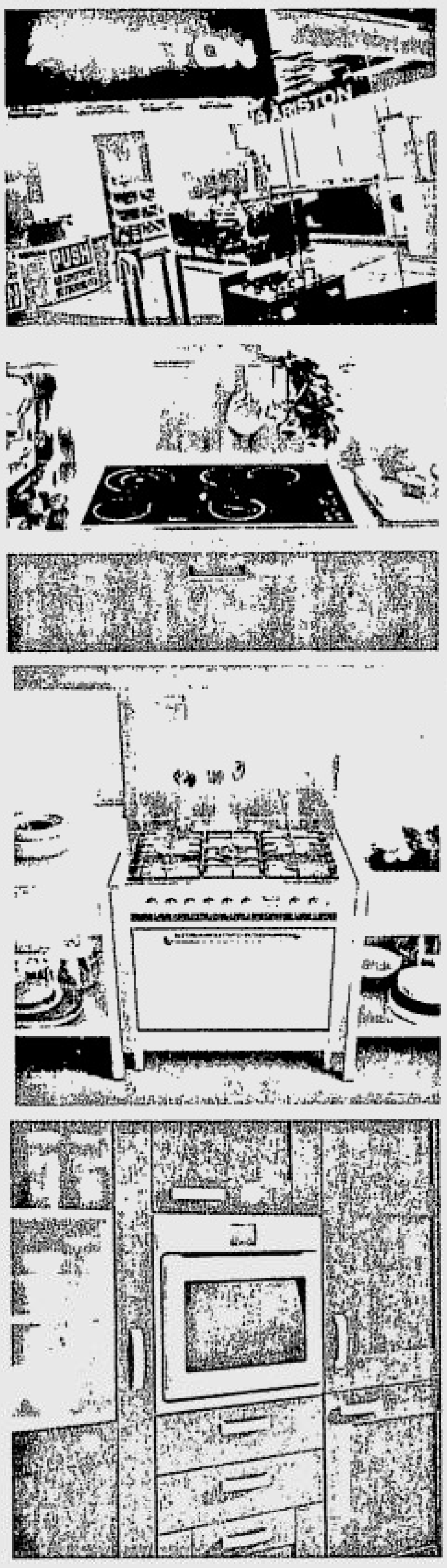


Make Time For Friends
ARISTON
TIME TOGETHER

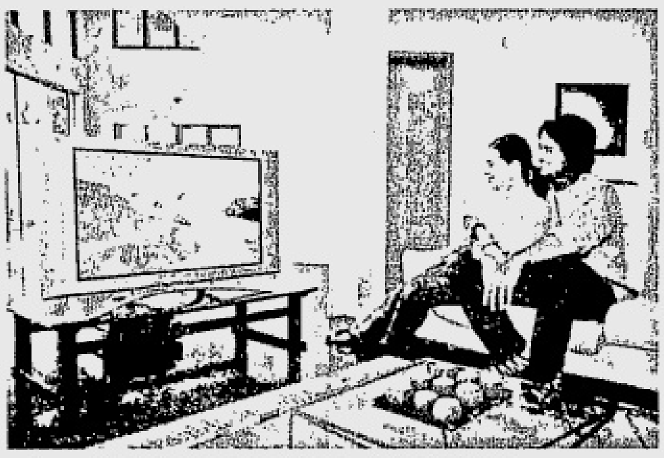
Presenting the new Ariston Cooktops. With stylish designs and superior features, you'll have more time for matters of real importance.

For instance, Ariston's bi-power burners let you regulate power by turning on the 2 rings independently. And at a powerful 5 kW, the burners ensure faster and more even cooking. The induction hobs only produce heat through metal conduction, so you avoid accidents. Double Face Fish burners feature two rotating, elliptical burners, perfect for fish pots and large rectangular pans. The multi-function hobs combine gas burners with electric plate, vittroceramic or barbecue griddle to suit all your cooking needs.

Available in 30cm, 60cm, 70cm, 75cm, or 90cm, gas, electric or multi-function. For more of 100% Italian-made Ariston products visit, any of the following showrooms.
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA Level 4, Tel. no. 631-8282 • **SM MEGAMALL** 5th Floor Building B, Tel. no. 633-9953
GLORIETTA MALL Glorietta 4, Tel no. 887-0075 • **CYBER MALL** Eastwood, Libis, Tel. no. 687-1566 • **MC HOME DEPOT** Fort Bonifacio, Tel. no. 815-8875

PHILIPS, NIKE LAUNCH PORTABLE SPORTS AUDIO

Philips Consumer Electronics, Europe's No. 1 consumer electronics company, recently presented to the media its new Portable Sports Audio line. The new product line, developed together with sports gear giant Nike, integrates Philips' advanced digital technology and Nike's hi-quality design in various portable music equipment built specifically for the active consumer. The Portable Sports Audio features M3 players, MP3-CD players, FM radio and headphones designed for sport activities. All are small and lightweight, with rubber control buttons for easier grip, and equipped with shock protection for skip-free music even during the most vigorous workouts. These also come with an armband, headphones, remote control, hand strap and butterfly apparel clip for extra convenience. Photo shows Philips Consumer Electronics general manager Angelo Valenton (third from right) with the Gold's Gym team members wearing Philips Nike Portable Sports Audio gear.



IT'S PHILIPS FOR RICHARD AND LUCY

For high-profile showbiz couple Richard Gomez and Lucy Torres, nothing is more relaxing than watching movies at home with their Philips Pixel Plus Plasma TV. This hi-tech television set provides outstanding picture clarity thanks to Philips' revolutionary Pixel Plus technology. And with the powerful surround sound capability, this TV is perfect for viewing one's favorite films, a favorite pastime at the Gomez household.

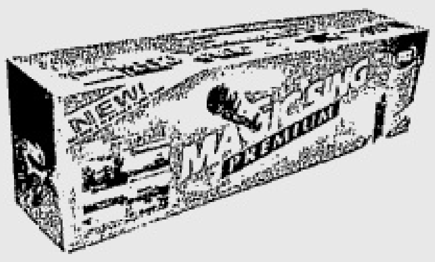
WE-Care heeds the call of notable institutions

ELECTROLUX Philippines Inc, in its hope to fulfill the company's commitment in bringing about positive changes for the community, recently established its WE-Care for the Society (White-Westinghouse by Electrolux Caring Action in Responsible Efforts) program to help notable institutions in their aim to provide underprivileged children an enjoyable and comfortable life.

This initiative aims to go to hard-to-reach areas, deprived of sufficient household tools to aid them in having a comfortable life. Through these efforts, thousands of disadvantaged Filipinos belonging in different charitable and non-stock organizations will be given a chance to live an easier and more enjoyable life through the White-Westinghouse by Electrolux's roster of products. "Electrolux has been an active corporate citizen worldwide. The Electrolux Group follows a philosophy that is truly global. We cooperate freely--regardless of geographical distance, national frontiers or language--to offer people all around the world products that make their daily lives easier and safer. However, here in the Philippines, we took stock of the scenario and made our own efforts to help out society the best way we know how. And that is how WE-Care for the Society came about. As you will see, we are initially taking step to help out some charity institutions that can benefit from our resources. We have selected, and will continue to select some more and give to them a few things that Electrolux Philippines can, to help their situations," reiterates Electrolux president Vichai Lorratawoult.

WE-Care believes in supporting charitable foundations and institutions that promote and empower destitute members of the Filipino community through product donations that would complement and assist them in their day-to-day needs.

Sing through the Philippines



AS PART of its initial offering for 2004, In-A-Jiffy (IAJ) Enterprises the number 1 distributor of Magic Sing Videoke Microphone in the country has just launched the Premium Edition.

The new Magic Sing Premium features 49 built-in WOW Philippines scenic backgrounds. Instead of the usual scenic backgrounds of other countries, you can now enjoy singing your favorite songs and take pleasure in our country's exotic sites as background.

In addition, the new microphone is integrated with recording and playback function. With the record and play back function, you can now review your last performance and correct whatever mistake you made. The new microphone can store up to eight minutes recording time or its equivalent of 2 to 3 songs.

The Magic Sing Videoke Microphone represents the future in home entertainment, by combining the portability of a microphone with the functionality of a videoke player. Other features include Scoring after each song, Hi-Fi Dynamic Sound Quality, Wireless stereo output at 4 FM frequencies, Random Song Selection, Instrument Selection, Song Reservation, Continuous Play, Vocoder and Team Game Functions.

You can also avail of additional song chips like the Tagalog Editions 3 (963 songs) and 4 (880 songs), as well as music in Spanish, French, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese and Indonesian. For more information, you can call 405-0178 or visit their website at www.magicmic.com.